Sanskrit was considered as "Dev Bhasha", " Devavani "or the language of the Gods by ancient Indians. The word sanskrita, meaning "refined" or "purified," is the antonym of prakrita, meaning "natural," or "vulgar." It is made up of the primordial sounds, and is developed systematically to include the natural progressions of sounds as created in the human mouth. Jawaharlal Nehru has said that Sanskrit is a language amazingly rich, efflorescent, full of luxuriant growth of all kinds, and yet precise and strictly keeping within the framework of grammar which Panini laid down two thousand years ago. It spread out, added to its richness, became fuller and more ornate, but always it stuck to its original roots. The ancient Indians attached a great deal of importance to sound, and hence their writing, poetry or prose, had a rhythmic and musical quality. Our modern languages of India are children of Sanskrit, and to it owe most of their vocabulary and their forms of expressions.

The Sanskrit grammarians wished to construct a perfect language, which would belong to no one and thus belong to all, which would not develop but remain an ideal instrument of communication and culture for all peoples and all time.

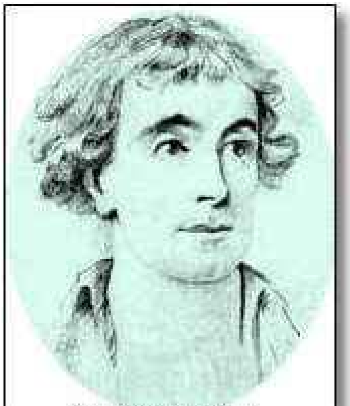
संस्कृत

SANSKRIT - The Language of Ancient India.

Sanskrit (meaning "cultured or refined"), the classical language of Hinduism, is the oldest and the most systematic language in the world. The vastness and the versatility, and power of expression can be appreciated by the fact that this language has 65 words to describe various forms of earth, 67 words for water, and over 250 words to describe rainfall.

Sanskrit was a complete success and became the language of all cultured people in India and in countries under Indian influence. All scientific, philosophical, historical works were henceforth written in Sanskrit, and important texts existing in other languages were translated and adapted into Sanskrit. For this reason, very few ancient literary, religious, or philosophical documents exits in India in other languages. The sheer volume of Sanskrit literature is immense, and it remains largely unexplored.

(source: **Virtue, Success, Pleasure, Liberation - By Alain Danielou** p.17).(For more about Indian influence in Southeast Asia, please refer to chapter on **Suvarnabhumi**)



Sir William Jones
(1746-1794)

Sir William Jones (1746-1794) came to India as a judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta. He pioneered Sanskrit studies. His admiration for Indian thought and culture was almost limitless. He observed as long ago as 1784:

" The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either: yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs, and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all without believing them to have sprung from some common source which perhaps no longer exists..."

(source: **Discovery of India - By Jawaharlal Nehru** pg 165).

Hindu literature is so vast, that he said: "human life would not be sufficient to make oneself acquainted with any considerable part of Hindu literature."

(source: **Hindu Superiority - By Har Bilas Sarda** p.205).

Alain Danielou (1907-1994) son of French aristocracy, author of numerous books on philosophy, religion, history and arts of India and perhaps the first European to boldly proclaim his Hinduness. He settled in India for fifteen years in the study of Sanskrit. He had a wide effect upon Europe's understanding of Hinduism. He has observed:

"The creation of Sanskrit, the "refined" language, was a prodigious work on a grand scale. Grammarians and semanticists of genius undertook to create a perfect language, artificial and permanent, belonging to no one, that was to become the language of the entire culture. Sanskrit is built on a basis of Vedic and the Prakrits, but has a much more complex grammar, established according to a rigorous logic. **It has an immense vocabulary and a very adaptable grammar,** so that words can be grouped together to express any nuance of an idea, and verb forms can be found to cover any possibility of tense, such as future intentional in the past, present continuing into the future, and so on. Furthermore, Sanskrit possesses a wealth of abstract nouns, technical and philosophical terms unknown in any other language. Modern Indian scholars of Sanskrit culture have often remarked that many of the new concepts of nuclear physics or modern psychology are easy for them to grasp, since they correspond exactly to familiar notions of Sanskrit terminology."

(source: **A Brief History of India - By Alain Danielou** p. 57-58).

The renowned British Sanskrit scholar **Arthur Anthony Macdonell** (1854-1930) ummarized :

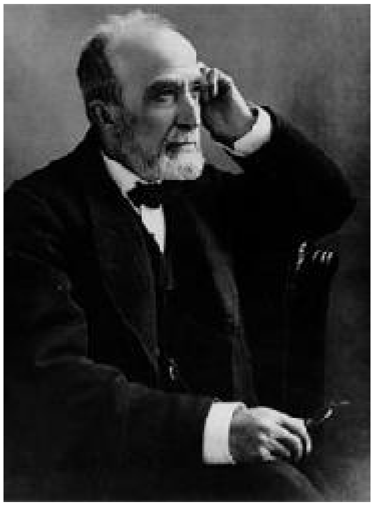
"Since the Renaissance there has been no event of such worldwide significance in the history of culture as the discovery of Sanskrit literature in the latter part of the eighteenth century."

(source: **In Search of The Cradle of Civilization: : New Light on Ancient India - By Georg Feuerstein, Subhash Kak & David Frawley** p. 257).

In the opinion of **Friedrich Max Muller** (1823-1900) "Sanskrit is to the science of language what mathematics is to astronomy."

Schlegel in his book, **History of Literature**, says, "It has also the Divine afflatus of the Hebrew tongue."

(source: **The Soul of India - By Satyavrata R. Patel** p. 76-77).



Sir Monnier Monier-Williams (1819-1899) Orientalist, professor of Sanskrit at Oxford in 1860. He made a lengthy and learned introduction to his monumental work: Sanskrit-English Dictionary. In his book Hinduism, on page 13, he says:

"India though it has more than five hundred spoken dialects, has only one sacred language and only one sacred literature, accepted and revered by all adherence of Hinduism alike, however diverse in race, dialect, rank and creed. That language is Sanskrit and Sanskrit literature, the only repository of the Veda or knowledge in its widest sense, the only vehicle of Hindu mythology, philosophy, law, the mirror in which all the creeds, opinions, and customs and usages of the Hindus are faithfully reflected and the only quarry whence the requisite materials may be obtained for improving the vernaculars or for expressing important religious and scientific ideas."

Dr. T. W. Rhys Davids, famous Pali scholar has said: "The introduction of the use of Sanskrit as the lingu-franca is a turning point in the mental history of the Indian people. The causes that preceded it, the changes in the intellectual standpoint that went with it, the results that followed on both, are each of them of vital importance."

(source: **Cultural Heritage of Ancient India - By Sachindra Kumar Maity** p.48).

According to **Forbes** magazine, (July, 1987), *"*Sanskrit is the most convenient language for computer software programming."

(Source: **The Hindu Mind -Fundamentals of Hindu Religion and Philosophy for all Ages** - **By Bansi Pandit** pg - 307).

NASA and others have been looking at Sanskrit as a possible computer language since its syntax is perfect and leaves little room for error.

(source: American Sanskrit Institute **http://www.americansanskrit.com**)

NASA researcher, **Rick Briggs** has written:

"In ancient India the intention to discover truth was so consuming, that in the process, they discovered perhaps the most perfect tool for fulfilling such a search that the world has ever known -- the Sanskrit language. There is at least one language, Sanskrit, which for the duration of almost 1000 years was a living spoken language with a considerable literature of its own. Besides works of literary value, there was a long philosophical and grammatical tradition that has continued to exist with undiminished vigor until the present century. Among the accomplishments of the grammarians can be reckoned a method for paraphrasing Sanskrit in a manner that is identical not only in essence but in form with current work in Artificial Intelligence. This article demonstrates that a natural language can serve as an artificial language also, and that much work in AI has been reinventing a wheel millennia old.

The discovery is of monumental significance. It is mind-boggling to consider that we have available to us a language which has been spoken for 4-7000 years that appears to be in every respect a perfect language designed for enlightened communication. But the most stunning aspect of the discovery is this: NASA the most advanced research center in the world for cutting edge technology has discovered that Sanskrit, the world's oldest spiritual language is the only unambiguous spoken language on the planet. Considering Sanskrit's status as a spiritual language, a further implication of this discovery is that the age old dichotomy between religion and science is an entirely unjustified one.

It is also relevant to note that in the last decade physicists have begun to comment on the striking similarities between their own discoveries and the discoveries made thousands of years ago in India which went on to form the basis of most Eastern religions.

Why has Sanskrit endured? Fundamentally it generates clarity and inspiration. And that clarity and inspiration is directly responsible for a brilliance of creative expression such as the world has rarely seen.

Another hope for the return of Sanskrit lies in computers. Sanskrit and computers are a perfect fit. The precision play of Sanskrit with computer tools will awaken the capacity in human beings to utilize their innate higher mental faculty with a momentum that would inevitably transform the world. In fact the mere learning of Sanskrit by large numbers of people in itself represents a quantum leap in consciousness, not to mention the rich endowment it will provide in the arena of future communication."

(source: **Knowledge Representation in Sanskrit and Artificial Intelligence - By Rick Briggs Artificial Intelligence Magazine** 6(1) 32-39 1985).

W. C. Taylor wrote in T**he Journal of Royal Asiatic Society**: "It was an astounding discovery that Hindustan possessed, in spite of the changes of realms and variety; a language, the parent of all those dialects that Europe has fondly called classical - the source alike of Greek flexibility and Roman strength. **A philosophy, compared with which, in point of age, the lessons of Pythagoras are but of yesterday,** and in point of daring speculation Plato's boldest efforts were tame and commonplace. A poetry more purely intellectual than any of those of which we had before any conception; and systems of science whose antiquity baffled all power of astronomical calculation. This literature, with all its colossal proportions, which can scarcely be described without the semblance of bombast and exaggeration claimed of course a place for itself - it stood alone, and it was able to stand alone.

"To acquire the mastery of this language is almost a labor of a life; **its literature seems exhaustless**. The utmost stretch of imagination can scarcely comprehend its boundless mythology. Its philosophy has touched upon every metaphysical difficulty; its legislation is as varied as the

castes for which it was designed.'

Count Magnus Fredrik Ferdinand Bjornstjerna (1779-1847) says: "The literature of India makes us acquainted with a great nation of past ages, which grasped every branch of knowledge, and which will always occupy a distinguished place in the history of the civilization of mankind."

Rev. William Ward wrote: "No reasonable person will deny to the Hindus of former times the praise of very extensive learning. The variety of subjects upon which they wrote prove that almost every science was cultivated among them. The manner also in which they treated these subjects proves that the Hindus learned men yielded the palm of learning to scarcely any other of the ancients. The more their philosophical works and lawbooks are studied, the more will the enquirer be convinced of the depth of wisdom possessed by the authors.

Mrs. Charlotte Manning says: "The Hindus had the widest range of mind of which man was capable."

(source: **Hindu Superiority - By Har Bilas Sarda** p.201 - 203).

Jean Le Mee born in France in 1931 and studied Sanskrit at Columbia University, has observed:

"**Sanskrit is the artificial language par excellence, patiently refined sound by sound...embracing all the levels of being physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual.** It is ideally suited to describe and govern the nature of phenomena from the spiritual level to the physical. This range of applicability in the realm of nature paradoxically makes this most artificial language the most natural language, the language of nature."

(source: **Hymns from the Rig Veda - By Jean LeMee** ISBN: 0394493540 1975. p. xii).

Friedrich Max Muller (1823-1900) in Science of Languages p. 203, calls Sanskrit the "language of languages", and remarks that "it has been truly said that Sanskrit is to the Science of language what Mathematics is to Astronomy."

(source: **Hindu Superiority - By Har Bilas Sarda** p.205).

S N Dasgupta and S. K. De have written:

"The majesty and grandeur of the Sanskrit language, the sonorousness of the word music, the rise and fall of the rhythm rolling in waves, the elasticity of meaning and the conventional atmosphere that appears in it have always made it charming to those for whom it was written. ...The wealth of imagery, the vividness of description of natural scenes, the underlying suggestiveness of higher ideals and the introduction of imposing personalities often lead great charm to Sanskrit poetry."

(source: **History of Sanskrit Literature - By Dasgupta, S. N. and S. K. De**).

"There is at least one language, Sanskrit, which for the duration of almost 1000 years was a living spoken language with a considerable literature of its own. Besides works of literary value, there was a long philosophical and grammatical tradition that has continued to exist with undiminished vigor until the present century. Among the accomplishments of the grammarians can be reckoned a method for paraphrasing Sanskrit in a manner that is identical not only in essence but in form with current work in Artificial Intelligence."

This paragraph demonstrates that a natural language can serve as an artificial language also, and that much work in AI has been reinventing a wheel millennia old. The discovery is of monumental significance. It is mind-boggling to consider that

we have available to us a language which has been spoken for 4000-7000 years that appears to be in every respect a perfect language designed for enlightened communication. But the most stunning aspect of the discovery is this: NASA the most advanced research center in the world for cutting edge technology has discovered that Sanskrit, the world's oldest spiritual language is the only unambiguous spoken language on the planet."

The discussion until now has been about Sanskrit, the language of mathematical precision, the world's only unambiguous spoken language. But the linguistic perfection of Sanskrit offers only a partial explanation for its sustained presence in the world for at least 3000 years. High precision in and of itself is of limited scope. Generally it excites the brain but not the heart.

Sanskrit is indeed a perfect language in the same sense as mathematics, but Sanskrit is also a perfect language in the sense that, like music, it has the power to uplift the heart. Why has Sanskrit endured? Fundamentally it generates clarity and inspiration. And that clarity and inspiration is directly responsible for a brilliance of creative expression such as the world has rarely seen.

"The richness of Sanskrit language is almost beyond belief. Many centuries ago that language contained words to describe states of the conscious and the subconscious and the unconscious mind and a variety of other concepts which have been evolved by modern psychoanalysis and psyche-therapy. Further, it has many a word, of which there is no exact synonym even in the richest modern languages. **That is why some modern writers have been driven occasionally to use Sanskrit words when writing in English.**

Consider, for example, the following passage in **Dr. Raynor C. Johnson's** **The Imprisoned Splendour**.

"To facilitate discussion I propose to call this higher level **buddhi** (coming from a Sanskrit word meaning 'wisdom'). Buddhi apprehends Truth directly - fragments of truth only, of course...It offers no reason for its perceptions, but it makes no mistakes, and this wisdom is passed through the level of Mind, to be there clothed in intelligible form."

And the following words by **J. Robert Oppenheimer** in **Einstein: A Centenary Volume**:

" Einstein is also, and I think rightly, known as a man of very great goodwill and humanity. Indeed if I had to think of a single word for his attitude towards human problems, I would pick the **Sanskrit word Ahimsa**, not to hurt, harmlessness. "

(source: **India's Priceless Heritage - By Nani Palkhivala** published by Bharati Vidya Bhavan 1980 p. 24-25).

Georges Ifrah (?) French historian of Mathematics and author of the book, **The Universal History of Numbers**

"Sanskrit means “complete”, “perfect” and “definitive”. In fact, this language is **extremely elaborate**, almost artificial, and is capable of describing multiple levels of meditation, states of consciousness and psychic, spiritual and even intellectual processes. As for vocabulary, its richness is considerable and highly diversified. **Sanskrit has for centuries lent itself admirably to the diverse rules of prosody and versification. Thus we can see why poetry has played such a preponderant role in all of Indian culture and Sanskrit literature. "**

(source: **The Universal History of Numbers - By Georges Ifrah** p. 431).

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Joseph Campbell (1904-1987), was one of the foremost interpreters of myth in our time. **Campbell** was a prolific writer, dedicated editor, beloved teacher, inspiring lecturer,

and an avid scholar of spiritual and cultural development. He referred to Sanskrit as:

"The great spiritual language of the world."

No one has expressed this more eloquently than **Sri Aurobindo**, the great Indian sage and 20th century poet philosopher:

"The Ancient and classical creations of the Sanskrit tongue both in quality and in body and abundance of excellence, in their potent originality and force and beauty, in their substance and art and structure, in grandeur and justice and charm of speech and in the height and width of the reach of their spirit stand very evidently in the front rank among the world's great literatures.

The language itself, as has been universally recognized by those competent to form a judgment, is one of the most magnificent, the most perfect and wonderfully sufficient literary instruments developed by the human mind, at once majestic and sweet and flexible, strong and clearly-formed and full and vibrant and subtle, and its quality and character would be of itself a sufficient evidence of the character and quality of the race whose mind it expressed and the culture of which it was the reflecting medium.'

Professor A. L. Basham, taught at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London. He has noted in his book **The Wonder That Was India**:

" Though its fame is much restricted by its specialized nature, there is no doubt that Panini's grammar is one of the greatest intellectual achievements of any ancient civilization, and the most detailed and scientific grammar composed before the 19th century in any part of the world."

(source: **The Wonder That Was India - By A. L. Basham** p. 390).

Alain Danielou (1907-1994) founded the Institute for Comparative Music Studies in Berlin and Venice, author of several books on the religion, history, and art of India. He said:

"Sanskrit is constructed like geometry and follows a rigorous logic. It is theoretically possible to explain the meaning of the words according to the combined sense of the relative letters, syllables and roots. Sanskrit has no meanings by connotations and consequently does not age. Panini's language is in no way different from that of Hindu scholars conferring in Sanskrit today."

(source: **Virtue, Success, Pleasure, Liberation - By Alain Danielou** p. 17).

Arnold Hermann Ludwig Heeran (1760-1842) in his Historical Researches Vol II p. 201, says: "The literature of the Sanskrit language incontestably belongs to a highly cultivated people, whom we may with great reason consider to have been the most informed of all the Epics. It is, at the same time, a scientific and a poetic literature." He also says: "Hindu literature is one of the richest in prose and poetry."

(source: **Hindu Superiority - By Har Bilas Sarda** p.203).

Cyril Edwin Mitchinson Joad (1891-1953) English philosopher and author of **The Story of Indian Civilization** has said:

"Sanskrit, a language which belongs to the Indo-European group and has been the chief literary vehicle of Indian thought, is an instrument admirably adapted to give expression to every subtlety of human thought, every nuance of human feeling...

The writings of Indian poets and dramatists, historians and biographers, contain evidence not only of richness of imagination and variety of feeling, but of a remarkable talent for expressing precisely those adventures of the spirit, which chiefly give to human life its meaning and significance.

(source: **Indian Culture and the Modern Age - By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri** Annamalai University. 1956 p.179-180).

Judith H. Morrison has observed:

"Sanskrit is a beautiful, powerful, resonating language, with a structure and richness not found within most modern languages. The logic and beauty within Sanskrit reflect the two levels needed to appreciate Ayurveda fully..."

(source: **The Book of Ayurveda: A Holistic Approach to Health and Longevity - by Judith H. Morrison** p. 17).

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Grammar

The Sanskrit term for grammar is **vyakarana**, which etymologically means "differentiated analysis."

Panini's Sanskrit grammar, produced in about 1300 B. C. E. is the shortest and the fullest grammar in the world. Panini composed a Sanskrit grammar called the Ashtadhyayi. In 4,000 short verses, it revealed the inner mechanics of Sanskrit - how the language worked and how new words evolved.

Sir Monier-Williams (1819-1899) Orientalist, professor of Sanskrit at Oxford in 1860. He made a lengthy and learned introduction to his monumental work: Sanskrit-English Dictionary. He wrote:

"The Panini grammar reflects the wondrous capacity of the human brain, which till today no other country has been able to produce except India."

Panchavati

“By Sanskrit is meant the learned language of India - the language of its cultured inhabitants, the language of its religion, its literature and science - not by any means a dead language, but one still spoken and written by educated men by all parts of the country, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, from

Bombay to Calcutta and Madras.

For example, the great linguist Panini gave the concept for meta-language-and constructed one-thousands of years before computer scientists began exploring the same idea. No one has been able to match him to this day.

The Sanskrit language is of wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either. An example of the resemblance: the word for ten is dasha in Sanskrit, deka in Greek, and decem in Latin. Thousands of Sanskrit words such as pitah, brahta, raja have cognates in nearly all European languages. Based on the undeniable resemblance of these languages, philologists termed them Indo-European language.

"The grammar of Panini is one of the most remarkable literary works that the world has ever seen, and no other country can produce any grammatical system at all comparable to it, either for originality of plan or analytical subtlety."

His Sastras are a perfect miracle of condensation."

(source: **Hindu Superiority - By Har Bilas Sarda** p. 229).

(For more refer to **Electronic Panini** - **http://sanskrit.gde.to/all_pdf/aShTAdhyAyI.pdf** and Sanskrit Learning Tools - **http://sanskrit.gde.to/learning_tools/learning_tools.html** and **A Software on Sanskrit Grammar based on Panini's Sutras - http://www.taralabalu.org/panini/greetings.htm**).

Albrecht Weber (1825-1901) author of **History of Indian Literature**, wrote:

"Panini's grammar is distinguished above all similar works of other countries partly by its thoroughly exhaustive investigation of the roots of the language, and the formation of words; partly by its sharp precision of expression, which indicates with an enigmatical succinctness whether forms come under the same or different rules. This is rendered possible by the employment of an algebraic terminology of arbitrary contrivance, the several parts of which stand to each other in the closest harmony, and which, by the very fact of its sufficing for all the phenomena which the language presents, bespeaks at once the marvelous ingenuity of its inventor, and his profound penetration of the entire material of the language."

(source: **Civilization Through the Ages - By P. N. Bose** p. 136).

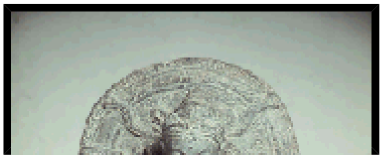
Arthur A. Macdonell (1854-1930) author of **History of Sanskrit Literature** has remarked:

"The Sanskrit grammarians of India were the first to analyze word forms, to recognize the difference between root and suffix, to determine the functions of suffixes and on the whole to elaborate a grammatical system so accurate and complete as to be unparalleled in any other country."

(source: **Main Currents in Indian Culture - By S. Natarajan** p. 100 and **India's Past - By A A Macdonell** p. 123).

Horace Hyman Wilson (1786-1860) says: "The Hindus had a copious and a cultivated language."

"The Sanskrit," says **Arnold Hermann Ludwig Heeran** (1760-1842) writes in **Historical Researches** vol. II p. 109-110, "we can safely assert to be one of the richest and most refined of any. It has, moreover, reached a high degree of cultivation, and the richness of its philosophy is no way inferior to its poetic beauties, as it presents us with an **abundance of technical terms to express the most abstract ideas."**



The distinguished German critic, **Schlegal**, in **History of Literature** p. 117, says:

"Justly it is called Sanskrit, ie. perfected, finished. In its structure and grammar, it closely resembles the Greek, but is infinitely more

regular and therefore more simple, though not less rich. It combines fullness, indicative of Greek development, the brevity and nice accuracy of Latin; whilst having a near affinity to the Persian and German roots, it is distinguished by expression as enthusiastic and forcible as theirs."

He again says: "The Sanskrit combines these various qualities, possessed separately by other tongues: Grecian copiousness, deep-toned Roman force, the divine afflatus characterizing the Hebrew tongue." He also says: Judged by an organic standard of the principal elements of language, the Sanskrit excels in grammatical structure, and is, indeed, the most perfectly developed of all idioms, not excepting Greek and Latin."

The importance of this "language of languages" is clearly recognized when we consider, with **Sir William Wilson Hunter**, the fact that "the modern philology dates from the study of Sanskrit by the Europeans."

"I am not a little surprised to find that out of ten words in Du Perron's Zind Dictionary six or seven were pure Sanskrit." wrote **Sir William Jones.**

Mons. Dubois says that **Sanskrit is the original source of all the European languages of the present day.**

(source: **Hindu Superiority - By Har Bilas Sarda** p.205 - 207).

William Ward (1769-1823) notes: “These grammars are very numerous, and reflect the highest credit on the ingenuity of their authors. Indeed, in philology the Hindoos have perhaps excelled both the ancients and the moderns."

(source: **A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos - By William Ward** volume II p 469 London 1822).

Antoine Leonard de Chézy (1718- 1798) was a determined French scholar, an engineer who finally became director of the École des Ponts et Chaussées. He became a passionate admirer of Sir William Jones' translation of the Sakuntala. He was seized by the desire to read the masterpiece in its original. With the help of Pons' grammar of the Amarakosa, and later of Wilkins' translation of the Hitopadesa, he began learning Sanskrit. By Sheer perseverance and remarkable ingenuity he was finally able to realize the dream - to read, and even publish, the text of the Sakuntala, **He, like many contemporary French thinkers, realized that Euorpe should be acquainted with the achievements of Asian nations**.

Among his works were: **La Reconnaissance de Sacountala** (1830), from the Sanskrit.

(source: **India and World Civilization - By D. P. Singhal** Pan Macmillan Limited. 1993. Part II p. 213).

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"Probably in no other single sphere have Western scholars been so indebted to traditional India as in that of grammar. "

Sir William Wilson Hunter (1840-1900) has observed:

"The grammar of **Panini** stands supreme among the grammars of the world, alike for its precision of statement, and for its thorough analysis of the roots of the language and of the formative principles of words. By employing an algebraic terminology it attains a sharp succinctness unrivalled in brevity, but at times enigmatical. **It arranges, in logical harmony, the whole phenomena which the Sanskrit language presents, and stands forth as one of the most splendid achievements of human invention and industry.** So elaborate is the structure, that doubts have arisen whether its complex rules of formation and phonetic change, its polysyllabic derivatives, its ten conjugations with their multiform aorists and long array of tenses, could ever have been the spoken language of a people."

(source: **The Indian Empire - By Sir William Wilson Hunter** p. 142).

Sir John Woodroffe aka **Arthur Avalon** (1865-1936) the well known scholar, Advocate-General of Bengal and sometime Legal Member of the Government of India. He served with competence for eighteen years and in 1915 officiated as Chief Justice.

He wondered why Sanskrit was not taught in British India:

"As regard the first point I am told that in an Indian University even Sanskrit is taught in English which means that only those who know the latter tongue can learn the classic language of event their own country. To me this seems an absurdity…In the same institution a European Sanskrit grammar is prescribed, the production of which was paid for at a larger price than would be offered to any Indian. Who offered it? Not the English. The Indian cannot I suppose write a grammar. **Yet India has Panini, Patanjali, Patanjali's Mahabhasya, Supadma, Kalapa, the Vakyapadiya, Bhopadeva, Sangkshiptasara, Siddantakaumudi, Laghukaumudi, amongst the ancient,** while the Vyakarana Kaumudi, Upakramanika of Ishvara Chandra Vidyasagara, and the Ashubodha of Taranatha Vachaspati head the moderns. How is it that all these have been displaced? A distinguished European Sanskritist once aksed me where I had learned Sanskrit, but that I had been and was still learning Sanskrit in this country. "Oh what a pity," he said, "Why" I asked? "They cannot teach Sanskrit in this country: they have no system." He replied. I laughed. **"They cannot teach Sanskrit in this country." – the country of Panini the founder of the science of language, the greatest grammarian the world had known,** and of innumerable pandits, men of real learning, few though men of the highest attainment now be. How has Sanskrit learning come down to us today if no one has been able to teach it?

(source: **Bharata Shakti – Collection of Addresses on Indian Culture - By Sir John Woodroffe** - Ganesh & co. Madras1921 p. xix xx). For more on Sir John Woodroffe refer to **Quotes 251-270**).

Albrecht Weber (1825-1901) is laudatory in his appraisal of the achievement of Panini. He wrote:

"**We pass at once into the magnificent edifice which bears the name of Panini as its architect and which justly commands the wonder and admiration of everyone who enters, and which, by the very fact of its sufficing for all the phenomenon which language presents, bespeaks at once the marvelous ingenuity of its inventor and his profound penetration of the entire material of the language."**

(source: **Yoga: A Vision of its Future - By Gopi Krishna** p. 123).

Mrs. Charlotte Manning says: **"The celebrated Panini bequeathed to posterity one of the oldest and most renowned books ever written in any language."**

"The scientific completeness of Sanskrit grammar appeared to Sir William Jones so unaccountable that he wrote it with amazement and admiration."

Mrs. Manning further wrote: "Sanskrit grammar is evidently far superior to the kind of grammar which for the most part has contented grammarians in Europe." "Vyakrana," says the same authoress, "was not merely grammar in the lower acceptance of being an explanationo f declension, conjugation and other grammatical forms, but was from its commencement a scientific grammar or grammatical science in the highest sense which can be attributed to this term."

Lord Mountstuart Elphinstone observed: "His work (Panini's) and those of his successors have established a system of grammar, the most complete that ever was employed in arranging elements of human speech."

Friedrich Max Muller (1823-1900) wrote: "Their (Hindus) achievements in grammatical analysis are still unsurpassed in the grammatical literature of any nation."

"Panini, Katyayana, and Patanjali, are the canonical triad of grammarians of India," and, to quote Mrs. Manning once more, **"such (grammatical) works are originated as are unrivalled in the literary history of other nations."**

William Ward (1769-1823) author of **A view of the history, literature, and mythology of the Hindoos**, says: "Their grammars are very numerous and reflect the highest credit on the ingenuity of their authors."

As regards lexicons, Ward says: "Their dictionaries also do the highest credit to the Hindu learned men, and prove how highly the Sanskrit was cultivated in former periods."

Alexander Thomson, the late Principal of the Agra College, and one of the best philologist in India, used to say that **the consonantal division of the alphabet of the Sanskrit language was a more wonderful feat of human genius than any the world has yet seen."**

(source: **Hindu Superiority - By Har Bilas Sarda** p. 225-230).

Walter Eugene Clark writes in **The Legacy of India**, p. 339-340:

"Panini's grammar is the earliest scientific grammar in the world, the earliest extant grammar of any language, and one of the greatest ever written. It was the discovery of Sanskrit by the West, at the end of the 18th century, and the study of Indian methods of analyzing language that revolutionized our study of language and grammar, and gave rise to our science of comparative philology. The most striking feature of Sanskrit grammar is its objective resolution of speech and language into their component elements, and definition of the functions of these elements. Long before Panini (who names over sixty predecessors) the sounds represented by the letters of the alphabet had been arranged in an overly systematic form, vowels and diphthongs separated from mutes, semi-vowels, and sibilants, and the sounds in each group arranged according to places in the mouth where produced (gutturals, palatals, cerebrals, dentals, and labials). Words were analyzed into roots of which complex words grew by the addition of prefixes and suffixes. General rules were worked out, defining the conditions according to which consonants and vowels influence each other, undergo change, or drop out. The study of language in India was much more objective and scientific than in Greece or Rome. The interest was in empirical investigation of language, rather than philosophical and syntactical. Indian study of language was as objective as the dissection of a body by an anatomist."

(source: **Our Heritage and Its Significance - By Shripad Rama Sharma** p. 152-153).

Leonard Bloomfield's (1887-1949) American linguist and author of **Language**, published in 1933) characterization of **Panini's Astadhyayi ("The Eight Books")**

"**as one of the greatest monuments of human intelligence is by no means an exaggeration; no one who has had even a small acquaintance with that most remarkable book could fail to agree.** In some four thousand sutras or aphorisms - some of them no more than a single syllable in length - Panini sums up the grammar not only of his own spoken language, but of that of the Vedic period as well. The work is the more remarkable when we consider that the author did not write it down but rather worked it all out of his head, as it were. Panini's disciples committed the work to memory and in turn passed it on in the same manner to their disciples; and though the Astadhayayi has long since been committed to writing, rote memorization of the work, with several of the more important commentaries, is still the approved method of studying grammar in India today, as indeed is true of most learning of the traditional culture."

While in the classical world scholars were dealing with language in a somewhat metaphysical way, the Indians were telling us what their language actually was, how it worked, and how it was put together. The methods and techniques for describing the structure of Sanskrit which we find in Panini have not been substantially bettered to this day in modern linguistic theory and practice. We today employ many devices in describing languages that were already known to Panini's first two commentators. The concept of "zero" which in mathematics is attributed to India, finds its place also in linguistics.

"It was in India, however, that there rose a body of knowledge which was destined to revolutionize European ideas about language. The Hindu grammar taught Europeans to analyze speech forms; when one compared the constituent parts, the resemblances, which hitherto had been vaguely recognized, could be set forth with certainty and precision."

(source: **Traditional India -** edited by **O. L. Chavarria-Aguilar** refer to chapter on **Grammar - By**

Leonard Bloomfield Hall - Place of Publication: Englewood Cliffs, NJ Date of Publication: 1964 p. 109-113).

Cybernetics:

It has even been suggested (by **Rick Briggs** NASA researcher - refer to **Quotes221_250**) that the 'structures' constructed by **Paanini** (followed by shaabdabodhas written later) could be useful in the development of efficient, high-level computing languages [we may presume here that these would eventually be based the systematics of deriving words from "roots" (dhaatus), avoiding the use of alphanumeric operator symbols, so characteristic of 'computer languages']. As of now, I understand that computer-based tests of the internal consistency of the "Ashtaadhyaayee" are being developed by Dr. P. Ramanujan at the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing. Software based on Paaninean rules for the retrieval of word forms has been developed at the Siddhaganga Mutt, Karnataka Research of an advanced nature is also being carried out at the Academy of Sanskrit Research, Melukote, also in Karnataka.** While these could be regarded as very active areas of fruitful investigation, the practicality of some suggestions on the possibility of using the structure of Sanskrt for machine translation (See, for example, a method of numerical representation of inflections put forward by the present writer in an article contributed to "Samskrti-94" (the 1994 issue of the organ of the Samskrta Sangha of the Indian Institute of Science), remains to be tested. Paanini's ideas may also contain the germ of an understanding, based on linguistics, that could lead to the unraveling of the connections between brain activity and how the apparatus of human speech works. The pertinence here is in trying to answer, for example, the question, "Why is it easier to say jagat + naatha as jagannaatha or abd-ul + rahman as abd-ur-rahman (both of which exactly follow the relevant Paninean rule, the second, from a Semitic language, showing the universal applicability of Paninean phonetics)? Such investigations can be expected to yield results only in the far future, however, after much greater progress has been achieved in understanding how the speech centres of the brain function.

(source: **Whence and Whither of Indian Science - Can we integrate with our past and carry on from there? – Contributed by S. N. Balasubrahmanyam** - (Retd) Professor of Organic Chemistry at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore).

(For more refer to **Electronic Panini** - **http://sanskrit.gde.to/all_pdf/aShTAdhyAyI.pdf** and Sanskrit Learning Tools - **http://sanskrit.gde.to/learning_tools/learning_tools.html** and **A Software on Sanskrit Grammar based on Panini's Sutras - http://www.taralabalu.org/panini/greetings.htm**).

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Frederich von Schlegel, (1772-1829), German philosopher, critic, and writer, the most prominent founder of German Romanticism. Educated in law, he turned to writing. His brother, August Wilhelm von Schlegel, was a scholar and poet. With his brother, August Wilhelm, he published the Athenaeum, the principal organ of the romantic school. **Schlegel** study of Sanskrit and of Indian civilization, **On the Language and Wisdom of India** (1808), was outstanding. He said that:

"There is no language in the world, even Greek, which has the clarity and the philosophical precision of Sanskrit," adding that " India is not only at the origin of everything she is superior in everything, intellectually, religiously or politically and even the Greek heritage seems pale in comparison."

(source: **Arise O Arjuna - By Francois Gautier** ISBN 81-241-0518-9 Har-Anand Publications 2000 p. 25).

According to **Friedrich Max Muller** (1823-1900) even a modern language like English does not have sufficient means to express :

*"***high state of mental excitement" as done by Sanskrit. This shows the cultural development of the ancient Indians.**"

Max Muller continues his thoughts on the importance and primordiality of Vedic literature:

"Sanskrit no doubt has an immense advantage over all other ancient languages of the East. It is so attractive and has been so widely admired, that it almost seems at times to excite a certain amount of feminine jealously. We are ourselves Indo-Europeans. In a certain sense we are still speaking and thinking Sanskrit; or more correctly Sanskrit is like a dear aunt to us and she takes the place of a mother who is no more."

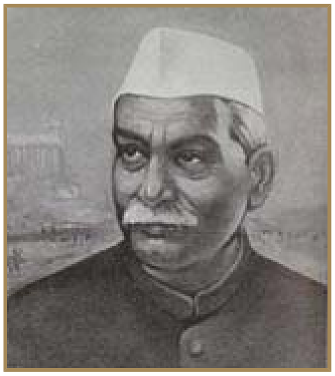
(source: **Chips From A German Workshop - By Max Muller** Volume I p 163).

Franz Bopp (1791-1867), German philologist, born in Mainz. He became professor of philology and Oriental literature at the University of Berlin. He became known as the founder of the science of comparative philology. Among his works is **A Comparative Grammar of the Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Lithuanian, Gothic, German, and Slavonic Languages** (1816). 36 years later, in 1852, Worterbuch (dictionary) appeared in Sanskrit.

Arthur A. Macdonell (1854-1930) author of **History of Sanskrit Literature** Motilal Banarsidass Pub. ISBN: 8120800354 p. 717 has written:

"We Europeans, 2,500 years later, and in a scientific age, still employ an alphabet which is not only inadequate to represent all the sounds of our language, but even preserve the random order which vowels and consonants are jumbled up as they were in the Greek adaptation of the primitive Semitic arrangement of 3,000 years ago."

It is a Western deception of the Christian world to deny the Ancient Sanskrit language its due compliments.



Dr. Rajendra Prasad (1884-1963) first President of India, said, "Sanskrit provided perhaps the most important focal point from which emanated cultural and political unity."

K. M. Munshi (1887-1971) aptly pointed out that "without Sanskrit Bharat would be nothing but a bundle of linguistic groups."

Shrimat Upendramohan, founder of Shastra Dharma Prachar Sabha, in his book **"Hindu Glory"** had written:

" The Sanskrit language is a marvel of marvels, an epitome of the people's genius, a picture of people's character, absolutely unique as a reflection of the perfect uniquity of the people of this land, of its social structure and of its Dharma. The vastness of the language, the copiousness of its lexicons, its fluidity or the capacity to embrace the existent and the non- existent equally marks out the Sanskrit language as the language of languages, the language of the Gods (Deva Bhasa), the language of mere mortals, with their restricted notions, limited wants and closed outlook."

Sardar K. M. Panikkar (1896-1963) pointed out:

"It is one common inheritance of Bharat. The unity of Bharat will collapse if it breaks away from Sanskrit and the Sanskritic traditions."

(source: **Reviving Sanskrit Teaching - By Mohan Gupta** http://www.newsindia-times.com/20010622/viewpoint01.htm).

Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in his **Discovery of India**:

"If I was asked what is the greatest treasure which India possesses and what is her greatest heritage, I would answer unhesitatingly that it is the Sanskrit language and literature and all that it contains. This is a magnificent inheritance, and so long as this endures and influences the life of our people,

so long will the basic genius of India continue." ...India built up a magnificent language, Sanskrit, and through this language, and its art and architecture, it sent its vibrant message to far away countries.

(source: **Know your values - K R Malkani**

http://www.hindustantimes.com/nonfram/291101/detide01.asp).

B S V Prasad has written: "Sanskrit literature is a perfect form of a perfect pleasure. It becomes a lifelong obsession for most connoisseurs; I know of no other body of literature that is so wholesome, so cultivating and uplifting, and so timeless in its appeal to readers. Sanskrit literature easily spans a period of some 5000 years; even though the language was no longer being spoken in the streets as far back as 1000 BC, literature continues to be created in Sanskrit to this day."

(source: **Kalidasa and Ancient India - B S V Prasad** - sulekha.com).

The sheer volume of Sanskrit literature is immense, and it remains largely unexplored. History, philosophy, music, astronomy, geography, medicine and other disciplines. It is an immense reservoir that needs to be tapped so that we understand our own history over the past five millennia.

Sanskrit is a very scientific language. Linguists hold that it shows no trace of a growing language. Its entire grammatical mechanism is perfected, every tense, mood, every number and person of the verb is fixed and all terminations of the casts are firmly established. The antiquity and affinity in forms of grammar and roots of verbs induces the linguists to believe that the Persian, Greek, Teutonic, Slavonic and Celtic races are probably descendents of a common ancestor. Professor **Leonard Bloomfield** (1887-1949) of Chicago University holds that Sanskrit language specially the scientific basis of its grammar is "one of the greatest monuments of human intelligence." William Humboldt of Germany is of opinion that language cannot be created artificially, it is the manifestation of power and divinity in man.

The first drama and musical notes are also supposed to have originated from the Vedas. The beautiful literature of the Hindus took thousands of years to develop. It raised the status of Indian civilization and culture. Without knowing this one cannot know the inner soul and glory of India. Speaking only of the vast Vedic literature, the wonderful manifestation of human genius developed through hearing alone.

Moriz Winternitz (1863-1937) wrote, "As the Veda, because of its antiquity, stands at the head of Indian literature no one who has not gained an insight into the Vedic literature can understand the spiritual life and culture of the Indians."

(source: **Ancient Indian Culture at a Glance - By Swami Tattwananda** p. 93-94).

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The Indian Theatre

The Indian Theatre - had its earliest beginnings in the Rig Veda which have a certain dramatic character.

There are references to Nataka or the drama in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. It began to take shape in the song and music and dances of the Krishna legends. Panini, the great grammarian of the 6th century B.C.E. mentions some dramatic forms. A **Natya Shastra - is a treatise on the Art of Theatre.**

The dramatic writings of the Hindus are equally remarkable. External nature, as might be expected in a country which is “the epitome of the world,” is the special forte of the Hindu poets, and, in no country, ancient or modern, has Nature (in contradistinction to man) been treated so poetically or so extensively introduced in poetry.

Creation in perfect harmony with nature is a feature of the Hindu drama. The characters are all creations, perfect in themselves and in their fidelity to nature.

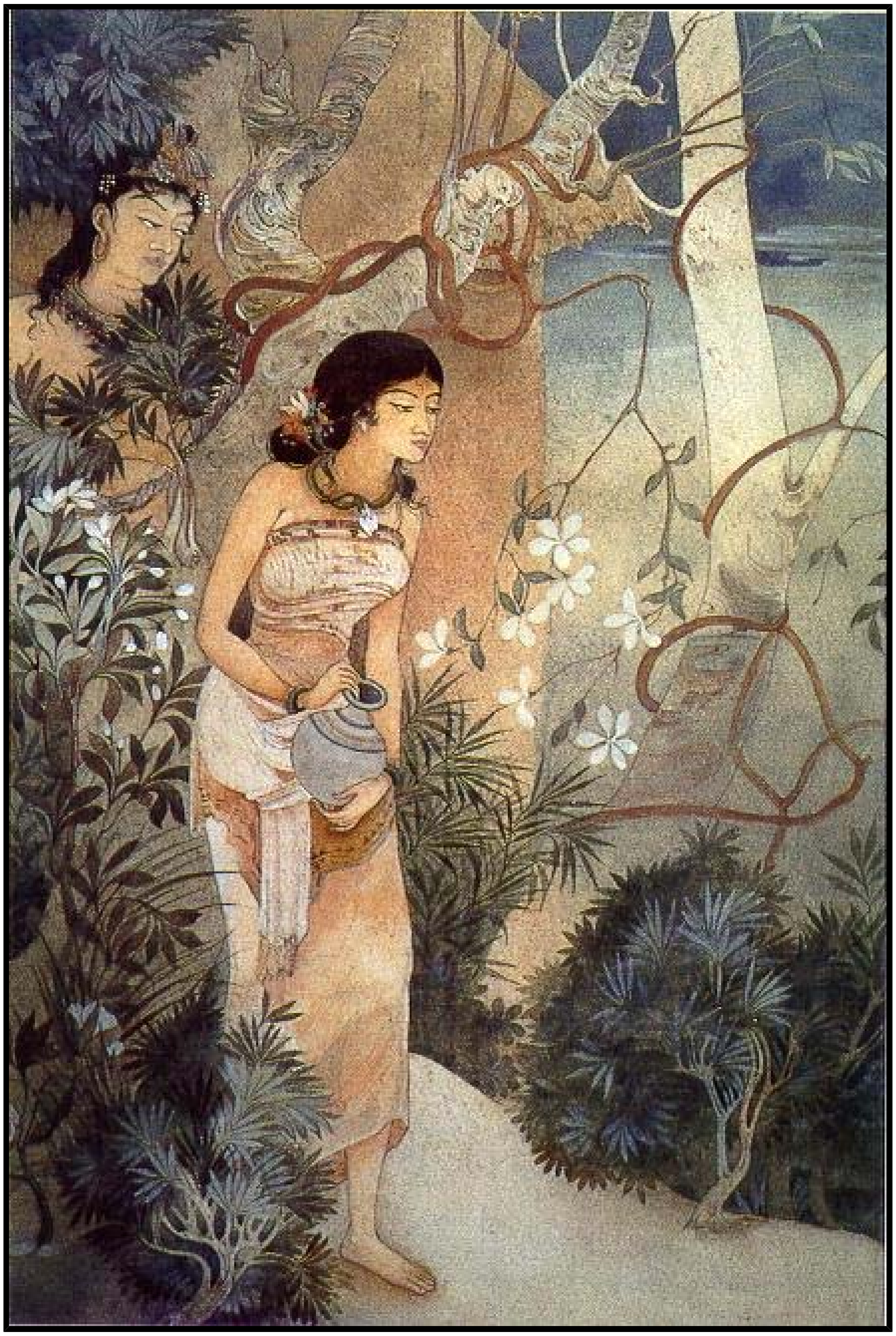
With regard to the extent to which the dramatic literature has been cultivated in India, **Sir William Jones** says that the Hindu theatre would fill as many volumes as that of any nation of modern Europe. The Mohammedan conquest of India resulted in the effectual repression of Hindu dramatic writings. Instead of receiving further development, the Hindu drama rapidly declined, and a considerable part of this fascinating literature was forever lost.

Horace Hyman Wilson (1786-1860) says: “It may also be observed that the dramatic pieces which have come down to us are those of the highest order, defended by their intrinsic purity from the corrosion of time.” Rupaka is the Hindu term for “Play,” and “Dasa Rupaka” or description of the ten kinds of theatrical compositions, is one of the best treatises on dramatic literature and shows the extent to which dramatic literature was cultivated by the Hindus.

The best known dramatists of the Hindus are Kalidasa and Bhavbhuti. **Kalidasa, “one of the greatest dramatists the world has ever produced,”** flourished in the reign of Vikramaditya in the first century B.C. while Bhavbhuti lived many centuries later. The masterpieces of Kalidasa is the play of Shakuntala. The plot of this “astonishing literary performance,” as a great German critic calls it, is taken from the Mahabharata.

Arnold Hermann Ludwig Heeran (1760-1842) speaks in rapturous terms of this **“far-famed drama,” which is incomparable for its beauty, charm, tenderness and fidelity to nature, and which, in fact, stands at the head of the dramatic literature of the world.** He says: “And we must, in truth, allow Kalidasa to be one of those poets who have done honor not merely to their nation but to all civilized mankind.”

Alexander Von Humboldt also notes the masterly mode in which Kalidasa describes “the influence of nature upon the minds of lovers, his tenderness in the expression of feelings, and above all the richness of his creative fancy” Her (Shakuntala’s) love and sorrow,” says **Sir William Wilson Hunter** (1840-1900) “have furnished a theme for the great, European poet of our age.”



Shakuntala watercolor - By Kshitin Majumdar

(source: Art and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1850-1922 - By Partha Mitter fig. XXIX).

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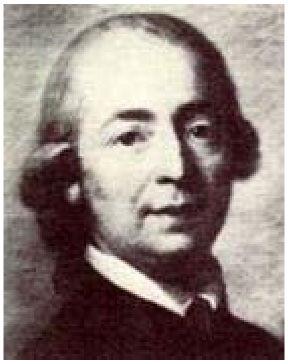
Europe first learned of the old Indian drama from **Sir William Jones's** translation of **Kalidasa's - 'Shakuntala,'** published in 1789. Something in the nature of commotion was created among European intellectuals by this discovery and several editions of the book followed. Translation also appeared in German, French, Danish, and Italian. Goethe was powerfully impressed and he paid a magnificent tribute to 'Shakuntala'. The idea of giving a prologue to Faust is said to have originated from Kalidasa's prologue, which was in accordance with the usual tradition of the Sanskrit drama. Kalidasa is acknowledged to be the greatest poet and dramatist of Sanskrit literature.

Professor Sylvain Levi, French scholar (1863-1935) Orientalist who wrote on Eastern religion, literature, and history. Levi was appointed a lecturer at the school of higher studies in Paris (1886), he taught Sanskrit at the Sorbonne (1889-94) and wrote his doctoral dissertation, **Le Théâtre indien** ("The Indian Theatre"). In **L'Inde et le monde** ("India and the World"), he discussed India's role among nations. **The**

Nataka, the Indian drama, says Levi, still remains the happiest invention of the Indian genius. He said:

' Le nom de Kalidasa domine la poesie indienne et la resume brillamment. Le drama, l'epopee savante.'

(source: **The Discovery of India - by Jawaharlal Nehru** p 159).



Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) German philosopher, poet and critic, clergyman, born in East Prussia.

When **George Forster** sent him his German translation of the English version of the **Sakuntala** in 1791, Herder responded:

"I cannot easily find a product of human mind more pleasant than this...a real blossom of the Orient, and the first, most beautiful of its kind! ....Something like that, of course appears once every two thousand years."

He published a detailed study and analysis of Sakuntala, claiming that this work disproved the popular belief that drama was the exclusive invention of the ancient Greeks.

(source: **India and World Civilization - By D. P. Singhal** Part II p.229 - 231).

One of Kalidasa's long poems is the **Meghduta**, or **the Cloud Messenger.** A lover, made captive and separated from his beloved, asks a cloud, during the rainy season, to carry his message of desperate longing to her. To this poem and to Kalidasa, the American scholar, **Ryder**, has paid a splendid tribute. He refers to the two parts of the poem and says:

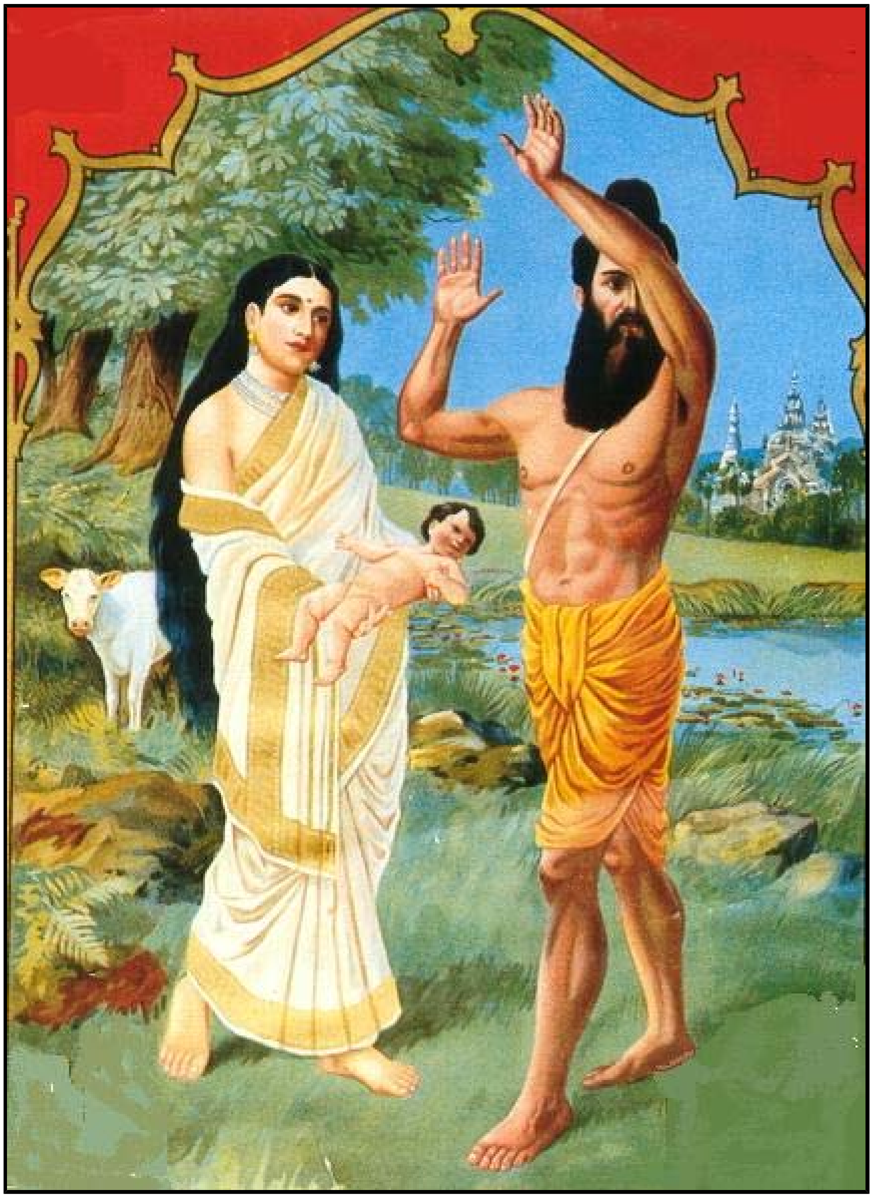
" The former half is a description of external nature, yet interwoven with human feelings; the latter half is a picture of human heart, yet the picture is framed in natural beauty. So exquisitely is the thing done that none can say which half is superior. Of those who read this perfect poem in the original text, some are moved by the one, some by the other."

(source: **The Discovery of India - by Jawaharlal Nehru** p 159).

One of the lyrics, **Meghaduta** (The Cloud Messenger), influenced the German dramatist **Friedrich von Schiller's** drama *Maria Stuart* (1800), and **Shakuntala** provided the idea for the prologue to the German poet **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Faust** (first part, 1808; second, 1832).

"**Kalidasa understood in the fifth century what Europe did not learn until the 19th century, and even now comprehends only imperfectly, that the world was not made for man, that man reaches his full stature only as he realizes the dignity and worth of life that is not human. That Kalidasa seized this truth is a magnificent tribute to his intellectual power, a quality quite as necessary to great poetry as perfection of form. Poetical fluency is not rare; intellectual grasp is not very uncommon; but the combination of the two has not been found perhaps more than a dozen times since the world began. Because he possessed this harmonious combination, Kalidasa ranks not with Horace or Shelley, but with Sophocles, Virgil and Milton."**

(source: **The Discovery of India - By Jawaharlal Nehru** p 159-160).



Menaka and baby. Rishi Vishvamitra disowns the baby. The mother Menaka abandons the baby too. The baby girl is taken care of by Sage Kanva and grows to be Shakuntala.
In "Abhijnanashaakuntalam" of Kalidasa, Menaka is the mother of Sakuntala.

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"Kalidasa understood in the fifth century what Europe did not learn until the 19th century, and even now comprehends only imperfectly, that the world was not made for man, that man reaches his full stature only as he realizes the dignity and worth of life that is not human."

(source: Art and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1850-1922 - By Partha Mitter).

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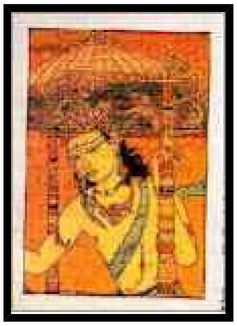
The ancient Indians attached a great deal of importance to sound, and hence their writing, poetry or prose, had a rhythmic and musical quality.

Vicomte de Francois Rene de Chateaubriand (1768-1848), who deeply influenced the Romantic movement in France, was an enthusiastic admirer of Shakuntala. He had lived in England as a refugee from Napoleonic France between 1793 and 1800, when Sir William Jones' translations of Sanskrit works were published.

(source: **India and World Civilization - By D. P. Singhal** Pan Macmillan Limited. 1993. p 241).



E. H. Johnstone, has written about this: " The classical poets of India have a sensitiveness to variations of sound, to which the literature of other countries afford few parallels, and their delicate combination are a source of never-failing joy. Some of them, however, are inclined to attempt to match the sense with the sound in a way that is decidedly lacking in subtlety, and they have perpetrated real atrocities in the manufacture of verses with a limited number of consonants or even only one."

(source: **E. H. Johnstone's translation of 'Asvaghosa's Buddhacarita'** Lahore 1936).

Sir Monier-Williams (1819-1899) Orientalist, professor of Sanskrit at Oxford in 1860. He says about the great drama of **Mrichakatika**:

"The dexterity with which the plot is arranged, the ingenuity with which the incidents are connected, the skill with which the characters are delineated and contrasted, the boldness and felicity of the diction are scarcely unworthy of our own great dramatists. Nor does the parallel fail in the management of the stage business, in minute directions to the actors and various scenic artifices. The asides an aparts, the exits and the entrances, the manner, attitude, and gait of the speakers, their tones of voice, tears, smiles, and laughter are as regularly indicated as in a modern drama."

His views of **Kalidasa** and the great play - **Shakuntala**:

"No one can read this act (4th Act), nor indeed any act of play without being struck with the raciness and elevation of its author's genius, the exuberance and glow of his fancy, his ardent love of the beautiful, his deep sympathy with nature and nature's loveliest scenes, his profound knowledge of the human heart, his delicate appreciation of its most refined feelings, his familiarity with its conflicting sentiments and emotions."

(source: **Eminent Orientalists: Indian European American** - Asian Educational Services. p. 155-157).

Christian Lassen (1800-1876) in his **Indische Alterthumskunde** says, "**Kalidasa may be considered as the brightest star** in the firmament of Hindu artificial poetry. He deserves this praise on account of the mastery with which he wields the language, and on account of the consummate tact with which he imparts to it a more simple or more artificial form, according to the requirements of the subjects treated by him, without falling into the artificial diction of later poets or over-stepping the limits of good taste; on account of the variety of his creations, his ingenious conceptions, and his happy choice of subjects; and not less on account of the complete manner in which he attains his poetical ends, the beauty of his narrative, the delicacy of his sentiment, and the fertility of his imagination."

H. Fauche, author of **Le Mahâbhârata,** 10 volumes, Paris 1863-1870, says, "The Meghaduta is without a rival in the elegial literature of Europe."

Sir Monier-Williams (1819-1899) in his book, **Indian Wisdom** says, "It combines the majesty of Homer with the tenderness of Virgil, the luxuriance of Ovid and the depth of Shakespeare. And yet it is simple enough to suggest the old Athenian boast of beauty without extravagance."

(source: **The Soul of India - By Satyavrata R Patel** p. 90).

Professor Arthur Berriedale Keith says that "The Sanskrit drama may legitimately be regarded as the highest products of Indian poetry, and as summing up in itself the final conception of literary art achieved by the very self-consious creators of Indian literature...**The Brahmin, in fact, much abused as he has been in this as in other matters, was the source of the intellectual distinction of India. As he produced Indian philosophy, so by another effort of his intellect he evolved the subtle and effective form of the drama."**

(source: [Sanskrit Drama - By A. Berriedale Keith]() Oxford 1924 and [The Discovery of India by Jawaharlal Nehru]() p 163-164).

Horace Hayman Wilson (1786-1860) who used to be professor of Sanskrit at Oxford University, has said:

"It is impossible to conceive language so beautifully musical or so magnificently grand, as that of the verses of Kalidasa.'"

(source: **[The Discovery of India]() - By Jawaharlal Nehru** p 160).

Soviet historians, **K. Antonova, G. Bongard-Levin, and G. Kotovsky**, authors of **[A History of India]()**, Moscow, Volume I and II 1973, refer to work of **Kalidasa**:

"one of the pearls of ancient Indian literature." and as **"an illustrious page of history of world's culture."**

(source: **[A History of India]() - By K. Antonova, G. Bongard-Levin, and G. Kotovsky** Moscow, Volume I and II 1973 p. 169).

Commenting on Kalidasa's work **Arthur Berriedale Keith** has observed: "Indian criticism has ranked Meghadutta highest among Kalidasa's poems for brevity of expression, richness of content, and power to elicit sentiment, and the praise is not undeserved."

In the opinion of **Arthur A. Macdonell** (1854-1930), "perhaps no other Sanskrit poem manifests such strikingly deep sympathy with the physical world, keen powers of observation, and skill in depicting an Indian landscape in vivid colors."

(source: **Main Currents in Indian Culture - By S. Natarajan** p. 91).

In both Sanskrit and Greek plays there is a sensitive awareness of nature and a feeling of being part of that nature.

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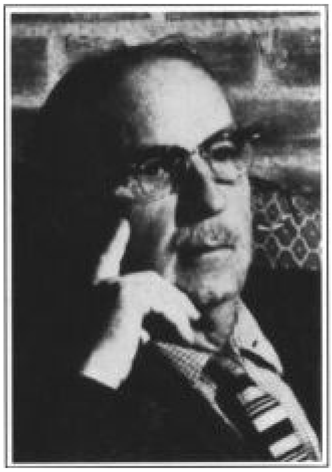
Shudraka's " Mrichhkatika" play

Long before Kalidasa, another famous play was produced - **Shudraka's "Mrichhkatika" or Clay Cart,** a tender rather artificial play, and yet with a reality which moves us and gives us a glimpse into the mind and civilization of the day.

An English translation of **Shdraka's "Mrichhkatika"** was staged in New York in 1924.



Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch, (1893-1970) the dramatic critic for **The Nation**, and author of **[The Measure of Man on Freedom Human Values, Survival and the Modern Temper]()**. He wrote of the play as follows:

"Here, if anywhere, the spectator will be able to see a genuine example of that pure art theatre of which theorists talk, and here, too, he will be led to meditate upon that **real wisdom of the East which lied not in esoteric doctrine but in a tenderness far deeper and truer than that of the traditional Christianity which has been so thoroughly corrupted by the hard righteousness of Hebraism** .....A play wholly artificial yet profoundly moving because it is not realistic but real....Whoever the author may have been, and whether he lived in the fourth century or the eighth, he was a good man and wise with the goodness and wisdom which comes not from the lips or the smoothly flowing pen of the moralist but from the heart. An exquisite sympathy with the fresh beauty of youth and love tempered his serenity, and he was old enough to understand that a light-hearted story of ingenious complication could be made the vehicle of tender humanity and confident goodness....Such a play can be produced only by a civilization which has reached stability; when a civilization has thought its way through all the problems it faces, it must come to rest upon something calm and naïve like this. Macbeth and Othello,

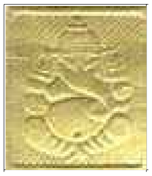
however great and stirring they might be, are barbarous heroes because the passionate tumult of Shakespeare is the tumult produced by the conflict between a newly awakened sensibility and a series of ethical concepts inherited from the savage age. The realistic drama of our own time is a product of a like confusion; but when problems are settled, and when passions are reconciled with the decisions of an intellect, then form alone remains….**Nowhere in our European past do we find, this side the classics, a work more completely civilized.”**

(source: **The Discovery of India - By Jawaharlal Nehru** p. 164).

In the following words **Juan Mascaro** pays tribute to the glory of the Sanskrit literature:

"Sanskrit literature is a great literature. We have the great songs of the Vedas, the splendor of the Upanishads, the glory of the Upanishads, the glory of the Bhagavad Gita, the vastness (100,000 verses) of the Mahabharata, the tenderness and the heroism found in the Ramayana, the wisdom of the fables and stories of India, the scientific philosophy of Sankhya, the psychological philosophy of yoga, the poetical philosophy of Vedanta, the Laws of Manu, the grammar of Panini and other scientific writings, the lyrical poetry, and dramas of Kalidasa. Sanskrit literature, on the whole, is a romantic literature interwoven with idealism and practical wisdom, and with a passionate longing for spiritual vision."

(source: **The Bhagvad Gita - translated By Juan Mascaro** Penguin Classics, 1962).



Sri Aurobindo Ghosh wrote: " The ancient and classical literature of the Sanskrit tongue show both in quality and in body an abundance of excellence, in their potent originality and force and beauty, in their substance and art and structure, in grandeur and justice and charm of speech, and in the heightened width of the reach of their spirit which stands very evidently in the front rank among the world's great literature."

(source: **Foundations of Indian Culture - By Shri Aurobindo Ghosh** p. 255).

Arthur Anthony Mcdonnell (1854-1930) has observed : **"The Sanskrit Literature in quantity exceeds that of Greece and Rome put together."**

Sir William Wilson Hunter (1840-1900) author of **The Indian Empire: Its People, History and Products** has observed:

"The grammar of Panini stands supreme among the grammars of the world, alike for its precision of statement and for its thorough analysis of the roots of the language and of the formative principles of words. By applying and algebraical terminology, it attains a sharp succinctness unrivaled in variety, but at times enigmatical."

(source: http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Ithaca/3440/revelation.html).

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This chapter has been featured in the **The Commemorative Sanskrit Souvenir 2003 of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan - Puthucode Kendra Kerala, India.**

Also refer to **Sanskrit in South India - By T.P. Sankaran Kutty Nair -** The Mushikavamsa Kavya of Atula is an important contribution to Indian Sanskrit studies. Mushikavamsa is the first historical work produced in India written with a historical sense, that too, at least half a century before the compilation of Rajatarangini. Since it came from the far south of India, it was neglected successively by all Orientalists.

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Lyric Poetry

The Lyric poetry of the Hindus is the finest of its kind in the world, for the reason that the language in which it is written is the most melodious and musical on earth.

As **Horace Hyman Wilson** (1786-1860) remarks, the poetry of the Hindus can never be properly appreciated by those who are ignorant of Sanskrit. To judge of the merits of Hindu poetry from translations is to judge it at its worst.

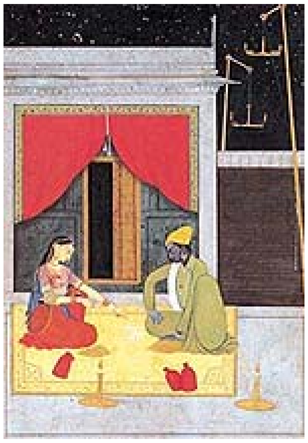
Gita Govinda is the finest extant specimen of Hindu lyric poetry, and it is difficult to find in any language lyrics that can vie with it in melody and grace. **Ralph Griffith** says: "The exquisite melody of the verse can only be appreciated by those who can enjoy the original."

Frederich von Schlegel (1772-1829) says in **History of Literature** p. 117:

"Tender delicacy of feeling and elegiac love cast a halo over Indian poetry," and "the whole is recast in the mould of harmonious softness, and is redolent of elegiac sweetness."

Arnold Hermann Ludwig Heeran (1760-1842) wrote: "The Hindu lyric surpassed that of the Greeks in admitting both the rhyme and blank verse."

"Gita Govinda exhibits," says **Lord Mountstuart Elphinstone** (1779-1859) "in perfection of the luxuriant imagery and the voluptuous softness of the Hindu school."



Another Hindu lyric is the **Ritu Sangrah**, something like "Thompson's Seasons" in the English language. **Mrs. Manning** says about it: "Ritu Sangrah, a lyric poem by **Kalidasa**, is much admired not only by the natives of India, but by almost all students of Sanskrit literature."

Ralph T H Griffith (1826-1906) in his translation of "Ritu Sangrah" says: "Sir William Jones speaks in rapturous terms of the beautiful and natural sketches with which it abounds," and, after expressing his own admiration, adds, "it is much to be regretted that it is impossible to translate the whole."

Lyric poetry was extensively cultivated in India. **Sir William Wilson Hunter** (1840-1900) says: "The Brahmins displayed a marvelous activity in theological as well as in lyric poetry."

Special charm must attach to the lyric poetry of the Hindus, for, as Mrs. Manning remarks, "Nowhere is love expressed with greater force or pathos than in the poetry of the Hindus."

Megha Duta is an excellent example of purely descriptive poetry. Mrs. Manning says: "It is the most important of its kind, and is a favorite with the Europeans too."

Horace Hyman Wilson (1786-1860) wrote: "The language (of Megh Duta) although remarkable for the richness of its compounds, is not disfigured by their extravagance, and the order of the sentences is in general the natural one. The metre combines melody and dignity in a very extraordinary manner, and will bear an advantageous comparison with the best specimens of uniform verse in the poetry of any language, living or dead."

(source: **Hindu Superiority - By Har Bilas Sarda** p. 258-260).

Archibald Henry Sayce (1851-1940) British Orientalist says:

" The Devanagri alphabet is a splendid monument of phonological accuracy, in the sciences of language."

(source: **Indian Culture Through the Ages - Mohan Lal Vidyarthi** p. 61).

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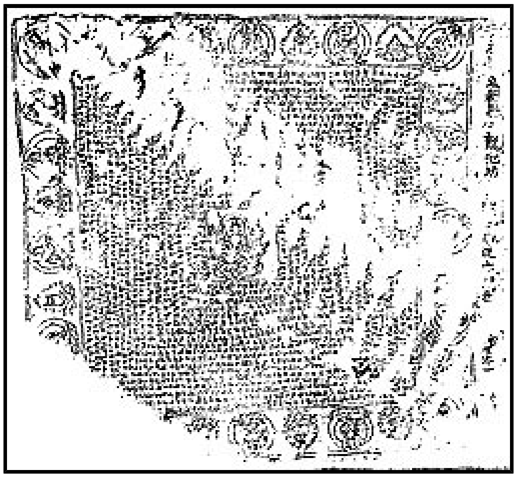
Sanskrit Text Oldest Example of Printing

CHINA, November 25, 2001: The exact year in which woodblock printing was invented is still very much debated in academic circles because no artifacts or documentary records related to the earliest printing have been discovered. **However, a sheet with mantras of the Dharani Sutra, in Sanskrit, printed in**

the early Tang and unearthed in the suburban district of Xi'an is the earliest extant printing relic. A picture of the still readable sheet is shown at below. The Dharani Sutra is the teaching of Buddha on "Longevity, the extinction of offenses, and the protection of young children.



(source: http://www.cgan.com.hk/english/cpg/engcp10.htm).

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Sanskrit had a vast influence among the nations of antiquity. In his book on **Chinese Buddhism**, **Reverend Joseph Edkins** says that the list of first and last letters in Chinese dictionaries are prepared in the third century A.D. and improved very much in the 6th century A.D. under Liang dynasty and that the Hindus came at that time to China, prepared the model of Chinese first letters, arranged them under heads of 36 consonants and instructed them on the manner of pronunciation with regard to the scientific basis of sound. In a different place, he says that probably the Tibetans and Koreans got their alphabets from the Buddhists and learnt to arrange them in the order as found in Sanskrit. From an account of **Hueng Sang** published in the latest book, **2500 Years of Buddhism**, it is known that the Chinese traveler, on his return journey from India to China, carried with him 657 Sanskrit books on Buddhism on horse back load. This shows the influence of Sanskrit not only on the ancient Chinese culture and religion but also on the arrangement of their letters proving the depth and popularity of this rich treasure.

(source: **Ancient Indian Culture at a Glance - By Swami Tattwananda** p. 93-99).

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Conclusion:

Francois Gautier, correspondent in South Asia of Le Figaro, France's largest circulated newspaper says:

"Sanskrit is the mother of all languages, and it could become the unifying language of India, apart from English, which is spoken only, by a tiny minority. "Sanskrit ought still to have a future as the language of the learned and it will not be a good day for India when the ancient tongues cease entirely to be written or spoken", admonished 50 years ago Sri Aurobindo, India's great Sage and Seer.

A dead language, you say! Impossible to revive? But that's what they argued about Hebrew. And did not the Jewish people, when they got back their land in 1948, revive their "dead" language, so that it is spoken today by all Jewish people and has become alive again? The same thing ought to be done

with Sanskrit. Let the scholars begin now to revive and modernize the Sanskrit language, it would be a sure sign of the dawning of the Renaissance of India. In a few years it should be taught as the second language in schools throughout the country, with the regional language as the first and English as the third. Then will India again have its own unifying language."

(source: **http://www.pragna.org/Iss02412.html**).

Sanskrit has always inspired the hearts, mind and souls of wise people. The German scholar Max Muller, who did more than anyone to introduce Sanskrit to the West in the latter part of the 19th century, contended that without a knowledge of the language (Sanskrit), literature, art, religion and philosophy of India, a liberal education could hardly be complete - India being the intellectual and spiritual ancestor of the race, historically and through Sanskrit. Max Muller also pointed out that Sanskrit provides perfect examples of the unity and foundation it offers to the Celtic, Teutonic, Slavonic, Germanic and Anglo-Saxon languages, not to mention its influence on Asian languages. The transmission of Buddhism to Asia can be attributed largely to the appeal to Sanskrit. Sanskrit, the only language that was ever used over the whole of India and the one best expressive of her spirit and richness, is today on the way to extinction, its study discouraged in both North and South India.

Even in translation the works of Sanskrit evoked the supreme admiration of Western poets and philosophers like Emerson, Whitman, Thoreau, Melville, Goethe, Schlegel and Schopenhauer.

Sri Aurbindo, the sage from Pondicherry has said:

"Sanskrit ought still to have a future as a language of the learned and it will not be a good day for India when the ancient tongue, ceases entirely to be written or spoken."

The fact is that Sanskrit is more deeply interwoven into the fabric of the collective world consciousness than anyone perhaps knows. After many thousands of years, Sanskrit still lives with a vitality that can breathe life, restore unity and inspire peace on our tired and troubled planet. It is a sacred gift, an opportunity. The future could be very bright.

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To Learn Sanskrit visit these sites:

Samskrita Bharati
http://www.samskrita-bharati.org/

Sanskrit Tutor
http://www.concentric.net/~sanskrit/tutor/tutor.html

Sanskrit Academy
http://www.samskrtam.org/

Sanskrit Software Catalog
http://www.gy.com/www/cat1/sa_cat.htm

Sanskrit Learning Tools
ftp://jaguar.cs.utah.edu/private/sanskrit/index.html

Sanskrit dictionary
http://pauillac.inria.fr/~huet/SKT/DICO/index.html

American Sanskrit Institute
http://www.americansanskrit.com

(For more refer to **Electronic Panini** - **http://sanskrit.gde.to/all_pdf/aShTAdhyAyI.pdf**

and Sanskrit Learning Tools - **http://sanskrit.gde.to/learning_tools/learning_tools.html** and **A Software on Sanskrit Grammar based on Panini's Sutras - http://www.taralabalu.org/panini/greetings.htm**).

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Articles:

Why Is The West Crazy About A 'Dead' Language?
Ajit Kumar Jha finds some of the biggest stars in academia teach Sanskrit
http://www.indian-express.com/flair/20010610/fla-1.shtml

Imagine going to Varanasi to study the tragedies of the Greek playwright Sophocles. Ludicrous? It seemed equally foolish to me when on my way to California some years ago, I met the daughter of a Marxist political economist from Calcutta, who was headed for Chicago, to pursue her doctoral degree in Sanskrit. The double irony of the situation befuddled me: even the Marxists were turning over-zealous to revive Sanskrit, and strangely one had to go to the West to do so!

Yet the irony has been in place for over two centuries now. **Even as we neglect our rich cultural heritage, it is the West that has revived interest in the East.** Notwithstanding Edward Said's powerful attack on the "Eurocentric" epistemology of Orientalism, and political correctness apart, half a century after Independence, it is actually the Occident that is busy rediscovering the genius of the Orient.

Ever since 1786, when Sir William Jones, in a paper presented to the Royal Asiatic Society, in Calcutta, said, "the wonderful structure" of the Sanskrit language, is "more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either," the West has been busy learning from Sanskrit.

This Western passion for the oriental classics is not only limited to Peter Brook's brilliant dramatic rendering of the Sanskrit epic, *Mahabharata*, or to the more recent attempt by Lee Siegel to write a sensuously funny modern day *Kamasutra* in a fictionalised form, entitled *Love in a Dead Language*. There is a much more systematic tradition of Sanskrit learning of over two centuries. Not surprisingly to a question about why should one study Sanskrit today, and whether it has any future, **Professor Sheldon Pollock of the University of Chicago had the following answer: "It is indicative of the appalling quality of the public discourse on Sanskrit in India today that you even ask this question."**

While we battle each other on the streets on whether Sanskrit should be revived in the school curricula or not, top notch western universities have been busy churning one esoteric dissertation after another on Panini's *Ashtadhyay* and comparing Bhartihari's and Patanjali's grammatical logic.

There are essentially two traditions of teaching Sanskrit in the West today: one scholastic, as a classical subject taught in the universities; the other as a religious discourse in the various temples being built by the cash rich Indian diaspora. The scholastic tradition, which began a couple of centuries ago continues till today. The temple tradition is a post-1965 phenomena, the year President Lyndon Johnson liberalised immigration quotas. Today, the children of the first wave of professional Indian immigrants to the US—mainly doctors and engineers—have entered the university in large numbers. It is these alienated kids, desperate to discover their historical roots and cultural heritage, who are studying Sanskrit with a passion.

The British tradition

The first chair in Sanskrit in England, the Boden Chair, was set up at Oxford in 1831. Later chairs were founded in University College, London, Edinburgh, and Cambridge. The Boden chair continues till today in addition to two other faculty positions. Professor Richard Gombrich, the present occupant of the chair, is known worldwide for his extraordinary work on Theravada Buddhism.

According to Gombrich: "The reasons for studying Sanskrit today are the same as they ever were: that the vast array of Sanskrit texts preserves for us a valuable part of the cultural heritage of mankind, including much beautiful literature and many interesting, even fascinating, ideas."

Today Oxford offers three kinds of degrees in Sanskrit: the three-year BA, the two-year M.Phil in classical Indian religion, for which Sanskrit is taught intensively, and the D Phil. The majority of the undergraduates are usually British students, while the research students are mostly from overseas, including a few Buddhist monks and nuns from South-East Asia.

In an attempt to popularise Sanskrit, Gombrich, has become associated with a new publishing venture. In the style of the Loeb classical library of Latin and Greek, the series will produce readable translations of Sanskrit literary texts printed alongside the originals.

The chair of Sanskrit in Edinburgh was established by the endowment of John Muir. The university of Edinburgh offers either a full honours course in Sanskrit or a joint honours course with Latin, Greek or Linguistics. Unfortunately, the interest in Sanskrit in Britain arose largely through colonial involvement. This, Dr John Brockington, who today teaches Sanskrit in Edinburgh feels, "has been at once the strength and the weakness of Sanskrit studies in Britain". The end of British rule in 1947 dampened the interest in Sanskrit, for instance, the Edinburgh chair was disestablished in 1949.

The American tradition

The Sanskrit craze has, however, caught up in the US. Unlike Britain, and unlike its own past, it is totally demand driven.

But first, some background. The teaching of Sanskrit first began at Yale university under professor Salisbury in the late 19th century. His student William Dwight Whitney became the pioneer in the development of American Sanskrit studies. This soon spread to Harvard, Berkeley, Chicago, Michigan, Pennsylvania and other campuses.

Today several American campuses offer Sanskrit along with modern Indian languages such as Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and Tamil. Student unions sit on hunger strikes demanding more and more departments. It has happened at the University of Texas at Austin and in various California campuses.

Although Sanskrit began to be taught at the University of Michigan, as early as the 1890s as part of Oriental languages, today, it is attracting large undergraduate crowds. Until 1985, it was primarily a graduate subject attracting mainly foreign students. Not any more. Most second generation Indo-American kids majoring in engineering, medicine, and business studies read Sanskrit not as a specialised branch but to satisfy the four-term foreign language requirement.

The University of Chicago attracts almost 30 or more undergraduate students every year to study Sanskrit. There are five faculty members teaching Sanskrit. Ditto at Harvard University which has a full fledged department of Sanskrit. In the other US universities it is a part of the South Asian departments and very popular among the Indo-American kids.

However, the interest in Sanskrit persists even in those places where there is no demand. The last conference of the International Association of Sanskrit studies held at Turin, in Italy, according to Brockington was, an eye-opener. There were a number of Sanskrit scholars from the Eastern European countries, including Poland, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, and Russia. Unlike the US, most of these countries hardly have much of an NRI population. They hardly have any temples. No community funding, no involvement of local populations. Yet, the zeal for Sanskrit continues.

While we in India today consider Sanskrit a dead language, the Westerners consider it as simply a fascinating language, a language in which the genius of the human civilization was perfected to its fullest.

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While we battle each other on the streets on whether Sanskrit should be revived in the school curricula or not, top notch western universities have been busy churning one esoteric dissertation after another on Panini's *Ashtadhyay* and comparing Bhartihari's and Patanjali's grammatical logic.

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The wonderful structure of Sanskrit is better than Latin.

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Reviving Sanskrit Teaching
By Mohan Gupta

http://www.newsindia-times.com/20010622/viewpoint01.htm

The British tried to enforce cultural slavery on Bhartiyas by gradually diminishing the importance of Sanskrit study. The condition steadily deteriorated even after our independence and Sanskrit gradually effaced from the syllabus of studies. This neglect of Sanskrit is to such an extent that many people started saying that Sanskrit is a dead language. Believing what the Bharatiya people say, most of the world also started treating Sanskrit as a dead language. Attempts are also being made by pseudo-secularists to eliminate residual Sanskrit in all its forms not only from the curriculum of studies in Bharat but also from our lives. During British colonial rule Macaulay, who was entrusted by the British government to formulate a plan for education in Bharat, and who was himself ignorant of the values of Sanskrit, had the cheek to say, " A single shelf of a good European library is worth all the native literature of Bharat and Arabia." He wanted to introduce an education system that would be effective to Europeanize Bharat — in morals, in intellect, in taste, in opinions" so that Bharatiya shall remain Bharatiya "only in blood and color, but British in their behavior and thinking." The modern policy makers of education in Bharat are no thing but shameless offspring of Macaulay and are apish imitators of his policy. So we find all around us that English medium schools are mushrooming everywhere and the younger generations are being nurtured in an atmosphere of a peculiarly mixed up obnoxious culture.

Witness the arduous travails of the descendants of Macaulay together with the Left intelligentsia bearing fruit — a hell lot of schools and colleges enriching the future generation of Bharat with complete details the facts and foibles of British royalty and relieving them of the burden of bulky Puranas or encumbrance of the likes of Kalidasa, Tulsidas, Tukaram, Kabir and many other Bharatiya saints. This way they truly honor Macaulay's vow.

The greatest adversaries of the attempt to "Bharatiyakaran and spiritualised education" by Murli Manohar Joshi, are the descendants of these "Brown Sahibs", the secular politicians, the journalists, the top bureaucrats, in fact the whole westernized cream of Bharat. And what is even more paradoxical is that most of them are Hindus. It is they who upon getting independence, have denied Bharat its true identity and borrowed blindly from the British education system, without trying to adapt it to the unique Bharatiya mentality and psychology; and it is they who are refusing to accept "an Bharatiyakaran, nationalization and spiritualization" of Bharat's education system, which is totally western-oriented. And what Bharat is getting from this education is a youth, which apes the west.

We have reached a stage where, in the name of secularism, a determined effort is made to denigrate India's culture and national heritage and even to decry Sanskrit as Hindu and Brahminical language. Secularism is equated with anti-Hinduism; ergo, the teaching of Sanskrit would be tantamount to undermining secularism. Consider what The Hindu newspaper said on this subject: "The unique role claimed for Sanskrit in fostering cultural unity would be contested sharply not only in the context of the Bharatiya historical experience but also in terms of deeply divided caste perceptions which would reject Sanskrit because of its perceived association with Brahmanical hegemony". What the writer says, in sum means, is that Sanskrit should be relegated to the ditch presumably along with the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, Aranyakas, not to mention the writings of Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti to attain secular nirvana. According to pseudo- secular people, the right place for our culture apparently is the dustbin.

As Sanskrit has not got its rightful place in Bharat, and many non-Hindi speaking states are not prepared to accept Hindi as the national language of Bharat, English language is having a sway on whole of Bharat. English is being taught from grade I in some states of Bharat like West Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra and many more. If Sanskrit is not to be taught in schools, what else should be taught in its stead to prove our secularism: Arabic? Chinese? **And if Bharatiya students, studying in Bharat, are not to be taught the Vedas and the Upanishads on grounds that would be "communal" where are they to learn of their own heritage: at Harvard? in Chicago? Bonn where there are excellent centers of Sanskrit learning?**

Sanskrit is the one common national inheritance of Bharat. The south and the north, the west and the east have equally contributed to it. Sanskrit belongs to all Bhartiyas. No part of Bharat can claim it as its exclusive possession. All the three major Hindu philosophic concepts were formulated in Sanskrit by 'southern' - Madhva (dvaita), Sankara (advaita) and Ramanuja (vishishtadvaita).

The first thing that Bharatiya children should be taught is the greatness of their own culture. They should learn to revere the Vedas, they should be taught the genius of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, they should be told that in this country everything has been done, that it was an unsurpassed civilisation, when the west was still mumbling its first words, the Bharatiya civilisation reached heights, which have been since unsurpassed civilization. They should be taught early that Bharat's greatness is her spirituality, her worldwide wisdom. Bharat's Dharma, her eternal quest for truth, should be drilled in the child from an early age. And from this firm base, everything then can be taught - from the most modern forms of mathematics, to the latest scientific technologies.

Sanskrit is not only the richest and most scientific language of the world. It is the highest repository of our Shastras — the Shruti, the Smriti, Puranas, Ramayana, Mahabharata etc. The wisdom of age-old civilization and culture of Bharat has been enshrined in Sanskrit and it establishes proper discipline in the life and elevates man to divine order. Sanskrit is eminently the storehouse of all the effulgent truths of our long enduring civilization.

Sir Monier-William made a lengthy and learned introduction to his monumental work: Sanskrit-English Dictionary. In his introduction he wrote, “By Sanskrit is meant the learned language of India - the language of its cultured inhabitants, the language of its religion, its literature and science - not by any means a dead language, but one still spoken and written by educated men by all parts of the country, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, from Bombay to Calcutta and Madras” Upanishads are regarded as the highest form of human intellect and discipline by the best thinkers of the world. If education aims to build up the character of students and to impart highest intellect to them, can there be any better language than Sanskrit to teach students.

In a landmark judgment delivered in October 1994 the Supreme Court of Bharat held that without learning Sanskrit it was not possible to decipher Bharatiya philosophy, culture and heritage. All the classics such as Vedas, Puranas and Upanishads, and the most enlightening literature of Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti, Banbhatta, Dandi etc. were in Sanskrit. The teachings of Sankracharya, Ramanuja, Madhvacharya, Nimbarka and Vallabhacharya would not have been possible without this language, said the judges of the apex court, laying special emphasis on the historical relevance of this ancient language.

Haunted by the ghost of secularism, many of our politicians are raising slogans against Sanskrit. But the learned judges of the Supreme Court, in their landmark judgment, have exploded the bogey of secularism and said in their verdict - “Secularism is neither anti-god, nor pro-god as it treats alike the devout, the agnostic and the atheist. We entertain no doubt in our minds that teaching Sanskrit alone as an elective subject can in no way be regarded as against secularism.”

The rich treasures and high potentialities or capabilities of Sanskrit to cope with any situation need hardly be emphasized. This apart, it exerted a great unifying force on the entire subcontinent of Bharat over a very long period. It was Jawaharlal Nehru, who said, “Though the country was split up in the past into various political entities, the basic language Sanskrit and the thought it represented continued to keep and preserve Bharat as a whole.”

Sardar K.M. Panikkar pointed out, “It is one common inheritance of Bharat. The unity of Bharat will collapse if it breaks away from Sanskrit and the Sanskritic traditions.” Dr. Rajendra Prasad said, “Sanskrit provided perhaps the most important focal point from which emanated cultural and political unity.” K.M. Munshi aptly pointed out that “without Sanskrit Bharat would be nothing but a bundle of linguistic groups.”

Shrimat Upendramohan, founder of Shastra Dharma Prachar Sabha, in his book “Hindu Glory” had written, “ The Sanskrit language is a marvel of marvels, an epitome of the people’s genius, a picture of people’s character, absolutely unique as a reflection of the perfect uniquity of the people of this land, of its social structure and of its Dharma. The vastness of the language, the copiousness of its lexicons, its fluidity or the capacity to embrace the existent and the non- existent equally marks out the Sanskrit language as the language of languages, the language of the Gods (Deva Bhasa), the language of mere mortals, with their restricted notions, limited wants and closed outlook.” He had also lashed out strongly when a move was made to dethrone Sanskrit

from its glory and to deprive it of the status of a compulsory subject up to matriculation as early as in 1936. Protesting strongly against this move, he made inflammatory arguments in his booklet - “Sanskrit Animus Begotten of Sin” - to prove that the: “The real objection to Sanskrit is that it is the greatest enemy of sin; that you can be brilliant master of Mathematics, Science, English, History etc. and yet be as sinful as your heart may desire. But Sanskrit with its inexorable Law of Karma, with its Hell and places of torment for sinners, who wish to live in the present and forget the future, who try to lull themselves in the belief that their own vicious Karma will not pursue them relentlessly in after-life, who hug to their fond bosom the disgraceful delusion that their sins will not be visited on their sinful heads.” He could see with his Divya Drishti (Divine Foresight) that Sanskrit was the sine-qua-non for Bharat’s life and culture and for the pursuit of her noble traditions.

Almost all the seats of power and authority as well as the commoners in Bharat are getting involved in corruption and crimes of all sorts. The police officers, highly placed administrators, the ministers and even the judges are reportedly involved in various crime and corruptions. What is the root cause behind this all-pervading corruption? Is it poverty? Surely not! It might be affluence, but surely not poverty. The charges are overwhelmingly against those who belong to the affluent and powerful sections of society. The financial scams that are sucking the country dry are far beyond the reach of the poor.

The Hindus as it was acclaimed by Col. Sleema, “never told a lie to save their reputation, property or even life.” The question that presents itself how such a deep-rooted faith, protecting the Bhartiyas through millenniums could die so fast almost suddenly, within a span of about fifty years after independence. The answer lies in English language and western education. The present education curricula in Bharat are un-Bharatiya, colonial, unrelated to our ground realities and needs, totally soul-less and devoid of ethical values. The colonial Macaulay system has produced Bhartiyas of slavish mentality. Self esteem and national pride which have been prevalent in Bharat since time immemorial, has been destroyed by the English education. It is because of British education system and worthy education ministers of Bharat that Bharat has the largest number of illiterates and will remain so as long as Macaulayites are at the helm of Bharatiya education affairs.

Macaulay had very little regard for Hindu culture, religion and education. The other major harmful effect of English education is that the pedophile people of western world rush to India for finding young boys and girls for their sexual pleasures as due to English language, pedophile people find the things much easy to manage in Bharat. They find their preys quite easy due to prevalent English language in Bharat.

Sayeed Naqwi wrote a few years back in **The illustrated Weekly of India**, **“May be if Sanskrit had been designated the official language of the country there would have been none of the rabid opposition to it as there is to Hindi, the country would have a unifying language and may be a national soul.”** The Commission headed by Radha Krishan and Kathori had strongly recommended the teaching of Sanskrit language in whole of Bharat. Sanskrit, which en- captures in it the eternal verities and soul entrancing truth and is rich with effulgent flow of knowledge and wisdom, is the greatest builder of character. So, in these dark days of corruption and rampant crime, revival of Sanskrit is absolutely necessary.

It is stupid to argue that Sanskrit - the most scientific language evolved by man - could not have become the national link language because everyone would have to learn it. Only two percent of Jews could speak Hebrew when Israel was born. Now everyone, literally everyone, reads and write Hebrew. This is how nations are made great. As a people, we have denied ourselves a common Bharatiya language and have therefore lost our moorings and spirit. Till Bhartiyas quit their slavish mentality, they will not get respect anywhere in the world.

Let it be said in loud and clear terms: Present-day education is largely barren and soul- less. It calls to heaven for correction, and secularists are not the ones to fill in the lacunae. Those of us who are contemptuous of our past cannot be trusted to make amends for the future.

As regards teaching of Sanskrit which is a classical, not Hindu language, the point may be made that it will be hard to accommodate it within the three language formula, but can’t a provision be made that instead of Hindi or English, students may be encouraged to learn Sanskrit which is the gateway to all our ancient writings? “Sanskrit ought still to have a future as the language of the learned and it will not be a good day for Bharat when the ancient tongues cease entirely to be written or spoken,” admonished 50 years ago Sri Aurobindo, Bharat’s great Sage and Seer. Let the scholars begin now to revive and modernize the Sanskrit language, it would be a sure sign of the dawning of the Renaissance of Bharat.

For maintaining the unity of Bharat and for finding its soul, Sanskrit must be made a compulsory subject from class III to X all over Bharat. There should not be any Bharatiya in the whole world, who either does not know Sanskrit or Hindi. It may indeed be said that one who knows Sanskrit is a better Bharatiya for he is in position to appreciate what every part of Bharat has contributed to it. Through Sanskrit we get something added to us from every part of Bharat. Knowledge of Sanskrit, however imperfect is a necessity and not a luxury.

Sanskrit should be declared the national language and a vigorous program put in place to explore its tremendous riches.

If human resources development minister Murli Manohar Joshi has his way, Sanskrit will become a compulsory language till the 12th standard. Joshi an ardent votary of Sanskrit has said, “We are discussing the possibility with the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) and the Central Board of Education.”

Joshi has been talking of restoring the past glory of Sanskrit ever since he took charge of the human resources development ministry and his statement came before an International Conference on the subject. Joshi said that some states has already given Sanskrit the attention it deserved. He claimed that Haryana had made the language compulsory till the 12th grade, but said some states have ignored it. “There are states like Rajasthan which are interested in promoting Sanskrit and others like Kerala and West Bengal which have totally sidelined the language,” he said.

At present, Sanskrit is not part of three-language formula adopted by the government since the 1960s. Schools usually teach the subject between class VI and class VIII. From the 9th standard, students are given the option

of choosing between Hindi and Sanskrit.

However, it will not be easy to push through Sanskrit in higher classes. “According to the policy document, Sanskrit is not part of the three -language formula,” said Arjun Dev, a former NCERT faculty member.

Joshi said it was now “well established that Sanskrit is the most highly acclaimed international language.” But, unfortunately, some Marxist academics were dismissive about the subject, he said, when pointed out that a section of teachers in schools and universities saw no glory in popularizing a subject that has no functional value.

Sanskrit is not only one of the most magnificent and precious heritages of our country, it stands absolutely on its own merit as the greatest language of the world. In fact, it is the most perfect literary instrument developed by the human mind and it is amazingly rich, efflorescent, resourceful and capable of expressing any idea strongly, clearly and precisely.

Haunted by the ghost of secularism, many of our political and intellectual leaders dither to accord the rightful importance that Sanskrit deserves for its much wider use in every field. To be precise, Sanskrit, which is one of the greatest heritages of all Bhartiyas alike, does not claim to be the language of any particular religious group. It is common property of all Bhartiyas.

In a landmark judgment the supreme court of Bharat declared in 1994 that, “Sanskrit occupies a unique position as the mother of all Aryan languages and its pursuit is absolutely necessary for nurturing our cultural heritage.” Exploding the bogey of secularism, which was raised against the introduction of Sanskrit studies, the learned judges appropriately said, “Secularism is neither anti-god or pro-god, as it treats alike the devout, the agnostic and the atheist. We entertain no doubts in our minds that teaching of Sanskrit alone as an elective subject can in no way be regarded as against secularism.”

The strongest argument for retaining and promoting Sanskrit studies, however, is the indisputable fact that it carries with it a dignified sense of values, the eternal verities and soul entrancing truths and the highest wisdom, which are the greatest builders of character. All out revival and propagation of Sanskrit is, therefore absolutely necessary to keep in check the cankers of moral degeneration. As it is one of the most precious treasures and the common inheritance of all Bhartiyas, it is the duty of all Bhartiyas to protect, preserve and propagate Sanskrit and to re - establish it in its pristine glory.

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Podium: Sanskrit in today's world

By Dr V. R. Panchamukhi

http://www.pragna.org/Iss03303.html

The fact that the Sanskrit language, the rules of its grammar and the shabdabodh are of great utility in the development of computer language has been acknowledged by many computer experts in USA and Europe. Computer experts such as Dr Riq Briggs, Dr Vyas Housten and Dr David Lavin have written extensively bringing out the usefulness of the Sanskrit language in developing computer software. There are also many Indian experts and institutions, like the CDAC, which have been researching this subject of the use of Sanskrit in developing computer software. We can go to the extent of putting out a statement that if you want to learn a computer language then learn the Sanskrit language. However, this field has not received as much extensive support and development as it deserves.

The usefulness of Sanskrit literature for modern times can be demonstrated in two ways. Firstly, by unravelling the basic knowledge and wisdom that is contained in Sanskrit literature to the world, and by working out new theories and paradigms of knowledge that can be built on the basis of the principles laid down in Sanskrit literature.

Even though the knowledge of Ayurveda forms part of Sanskrit literature, there have not been many initiatives to demonstrate its validity to the modern world through modern means of validation and communication. The schism that exists between the traditional Ayurveda and the modern world, is responsible for the absence of pro-active initiatives for safeguarding the advantages of indigenous knowledge. The Ayurvedic world should establish R&D centres, adopt the modern approach of validation, pilot testing, etc. and complete the paper work for patenting their unique formulations.

For this purpose the institutional facilitation for preparing the traditional world to interact with the modern world and also facilitating patent registration, pilot testing and commercialisation need to be strengthened.

In order to eliminate the negative attitude towards Sanskrit from our midst, we must remove the fear that Sanskrit is a difficult language. In this context, the commendable work being done by a voluntary organisation called Sanskrit Bharati to conduct Sanskrit conversation classes deserves special mention. Such programmes should be conducted on an extensive basis in different parts of the country.

Here are five ways for bringing Sanskrit to the centre-stage of our cultural and intellectual pursuits. We should :

1. Encourage basic research on the linkages that exist between Sanskrit and science and launch innovative activities to bridge the gap between Sanskrit and the Modern World.

2. Encourage research and debate the application of Sanskrit in the development of computer software for language processing.

3. Produce documentaries and TV serials in simple Sanskrit for telecast.

4. Set up computer based networking among Sanskrit institutions and Sanskrit manuscript libraries for improving the communications among Sanskrit scholars and researchers. The Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati, proposes to launch a SANSK-NET Software for this purpose.

5. Finally, we should change the teaching methodology and launch innovative schemes for teaching people Sanskrit conversation.

(Excerpt from a broadcast talk by Dr V. R. Panchamukhi, Chancellor of the Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati, courtesy The Hindustan Times, March 13, 1999)

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Some of the most forward-looking engineering students in India will soon be learning the ancient language of Sanskrit. The decision by the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Delhi** to offer science courses based on Sanskrit teachings.

Ancient Indians are credited with having made amazing discoveries in astronomy, architecture, medicine and other fields. They had a unique method of calculation, which is now called Vedic Mathematics. (For more refer to chapter on **Hindu Culture**).

Most of the information of that age was recorded in Sanskrit -- a language that hasn't been widely used in a thousand years.

Our notion of science comes from (the) West, in the same way that our notion of education, politics, literature, et cetera, come from the West," said Wagish Shukla, a mathematics professor at IIT, Delhi, who is also a Sanskrit scholar.

"We have become an intellectual colony of the West under amnesia, regarding the knowledge society we were.

"The problem today is that inputs from Sanskrit are disenfranchised from our education. For instance, when a student wants to understand a particular issue, he or she is debarred from finding out what Vedanta or Nyaya or Mimamsa (ancient Indian knowledge bases) has to say about it."

(source: **wired.com**).

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Indians in Israel-led study on Sanskrit poetry

Jerusalem: **Two Indian experts are part of an ambitious Israel-led project to chart the literary evolution of two millennia of Sanskrit poetry, or 'kavya'.**

"Since the discovery of Indian poetry by Western scholars in the 18th century, several histories have been written, but the story of Sanskrit's poetic evolution remains largely untold," said H.V. Nagaraja Rao of the International Sanskrit Research Centre at Mysore University.

"We have only a very rudimentary idea of major thematic shifts and stylistic breakthroughs of the 'mahakavya' tradition that held sway in the golden era of Indian literature between the first and 12th centuries -- epitomised in the works of the famous fourth century Indian poet and playwright Kalidasa," Rao told IANS.

"Our aim is to map the crucial social milieu of historic moments when innovative literary fashions were created, or when poets deviated from their predecessors to break new paths in 'kavya'," he said.

Rao is a Sanskrit grammar expert and is currently a research fellow at the Hebrew University's Institute for Advanced Studies in Jerusalem. Rao is one of the 14 renowned Sanskrit scholars taking issue with the notion that 'kavya' poetic forms did not change through the centuries.

(source: **Indians in Israel-led study on Sanskrit poetry** - newindpress.com).

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No guardians for old Sanskrit books

Hydrebad: Sanskrit, though has lured a sizable number of enthusiasts to learn the language, **it has failed to attract any patron willing to contribute for reviving out-of-print old Sanskrit books.**

The Surabharati Samiti, a one-of-itskind organisation promoting the language among city residents, has identified at least eight Sanskrit books that were very popular but are out-of-print now. A funds crunch is deterring the samiti from reprinting these old books.

Some of these books, which also have Telugu translations, were authored to introduce Sanskrit to the younger generation. ‘Ramayanam lo Ratnalu’ had excerpts from the Ramayanam that were explained in simple Telugu for youngsters.

There was also a book on the morals from the Mahabharata and many others on Bhagavatham and Upanishads. “It would cost us approximately Rs 2 lakh for the reprints, but no one is coming forward to give us funds,” said secretary Surabharati Samiti, B Narsimha Charyulu.

The books themselves are very inexpensive costing just Rs 6.50 to Rs 16 per copy. “Anyone can afford to buy these books and have some quality Sanskrit reading,” Narasimha Charyulu said.

Earlier, many philanthropists and even the Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanams (TTD) made donations for the samiti’s activities, which included publications of such useful Sanskrit books. But now, there seems to be a dearth for Sanskrit patrons. Meanwhile, the Samiti has other worries.

It’s awaiting extension of lease on the land it borrowed from the Osmania University for its workings. Though the university isn’t asking the samiti to vacate the premises on which it has been functioning for as many as 30 years, it (university) is yet to give a lease extension.

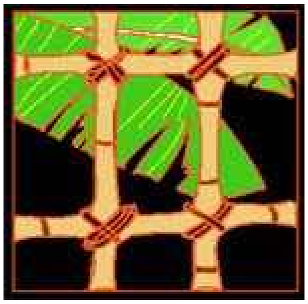
Surabharati Samiti is one of the first independent organisations that was set up in 1970 to propagate Sanskrit among people. Earlier, people studying the language would approach the scholars and professors-members of the Samiti to clear their doubts. Now, it offers many courses in Sanskrit learning including spoken Sanskrit classes.

In January this year, it was recognised as one of the centres for non-formal Sanskrit education by the Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi.

(source: No guardians for old Sanskrit books - timesofindia.com).

Did You Know?

Ayurveda, a Sanskrit word means "The Science of Life"



Avurveda, a Sanskrit word meaning "The Science of Life", is a holistic health care which evolved on the Indian sub-continent some 4,000 years ago. Established by the same great sages who introduced the original system of meditation, yoga and astrology, Ayurveda surpasses all modern health care systems in it's range of therapeutic modalities. It uses a vast variety of natural approaches to health care including meditation, dietary recommendations, exercise, massage, allowing procedures and daily and seasonal regimens. Together they promote a state of physical and psychological well being by balancing the mind, body, behavior and environment. Ayurveda is the ancient Indian medical science, the origin of which can be traced back to the Vedas, which are the oldest available classics of the world. Vedas are the ancient books of knowledge, or science, from India.

Ayurveda is the only ancient independent scientific system of medicines. In the medieval period however, the system faced utter neglect at the hands of foreign rulers. Some authentic literature was destroyed in these turbulent times. Even then Ayurveda contributed to public health system due its safe and most effective herbal formulations and easy availability. The seers who initiated Ayurveda inducted in it sufficiency, soundness and sustenance, that is why it survived.

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ॐ नमः शिवाय

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

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